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ABSTRACT

This publication provides the high school home economics teacher with (1) self-instructional materials with accurate information and concepts about aging and (2) a curriculum to assist in teaching aging in the home economics classroom. The purpose of the self-instructional materials is to allow the teacher to demonstrate knowledge of introductory background information on aging, describe three methods of implementing aging into the curriculum in five home economics subject-matter areas, and utilize their knowledge in these areas. Materials are divided into these five subject-matter sections: human development, housing, nutrition, clothing, and consumer problems. Each section contains a discussion on integrating this area into the classroom, subject-matter content, and a learning activity. An appendix contains learning activity answer keys. The curriculum is also divided into the five subject-matter areas. Each unit (on one subject area) contains a conceptual structure, generalization, objectives, competencies, list of resources, and learning experiences (activity sheets) with teacher suggestions. (YLB)

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INTEGRATING AGING INTO THE HOME ECONOMICS CURRICULUM

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INTRODUCTION

Do you dread becoming old? Do you feel old people have low self-concepts? Would you rather be with young people than old people? Do you feel old people have an unimportant role in society? If you answered yes to any of these questions, just like millions of other Americans, you may have negative attitude(s) concerning the elderly.

These negative attitudes contribute to the need for education about aging. Home economics teachers have been asked by recent legislation to place more emphasis on the aged and aging in the home economics classroom. In order to teach positive attitudes about aging, teachers must work on developing positive attitudes of their own.

In the past, home economics has devoted many hours to teaching child development and marriage and family living. But little or nothing has been taught by home economics teachers about the later stages of the life cycle. By using these materials, you will be provided with accurate information and concepts to use in educating yourself and, in turn, teaching about aging in your home economics classes. Hopefully, this will lessen the chance of teachers passing on any of the common myths about and stereotypes of older persons to high school students. You will also be provided with a curriculum to assist you in

teaching aging in your home economics classroom. It can be found in Appendix B of these materials. Each subject-matter area of the curriculum consists of a) conceptual structure, b) generalizations, c) objectives, d) competencies, e) learning experiences, and resources. It is not necessary to read or review the curriculum in order to complete these materials.

Teaching about the aged and aging in high school home economics classes will facilitate the development of positive attitudes and an understanding of the later years of the life cycle by high school students. Negative attitudes toward aging presents social problems for the elderly and creates a barrier between the young and the old. Often these attitudes are a result of the myths and stereotypes alluded to previously. Teaching about aging may also contribute to successful aging by the high school student when he/she reaches this stage of the life cycle.

Objectives

After completing these self-instructional materials, the high school home economics teacher will be able to:

1) demonstrate knowledge of introductory background information on aging as it relates to home economics in human development, food and nutrition, housing, clothing, and consumer problems;

2) describe three methods of implementing aging into

the curriculum in the five home economics subject-matter areas; and

3) suggest ways high school students can utilize their knowledge of the elderly in the five home economics subject-matter areas.

Organization and Use

The self-instructional materials on "Integrating Aging into the High School Home Economics Curriculum" are divided into the following subject-matter sections:

a) human development

b) housing

c) nutrition

d) clothing

e) consumer problems

For each of the above sections, the procedure below will be followed to complete the materials:

1) Read the discussion entitled "Integrating (section) of Aging into the Home Economics Classroom."

2) Read the subject-matter content on the particular section.

3) Complete the learning activity developed for that section.

4) Check your answers for that section with the answers in Appendix A of these materials.

5) Proceed on to the next section, repeating this format.

Definitions

ACUTE HEALTH CONDITIONS - health-related concerns which are short-lived, such as colds.

AGED - usually used when talking about persons 65 years old and older, established because of the age of retirement set by our society in the past.

AGE INTEGRATION - interaction with people of all ages.

AGE SEGREGATION - interaction with people who are in the same age range as oneself.

AGING - a process everyone is going through which begins at birth and ends with death. It includes the biological, sociological, and psychological changes an individual undergoes throughout the life cycle.

ARTHRITIS - inflammation of a joint or joints.

CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS - health-related concerns which continue over a long period of time, such as arthritis or cancer.

DIABETES - a condition characterized by the body's inability to burn consumed carbohydrates (starches and sugars) efficiently.

DISENGAGED - withdrawn from the concerns and activities involved in life.

GERONTOLOGY - the study of the aging process and the problems of the aged.

GERONTOLOGIST - a professional who studies the process and problems of the aged.

INTERGENERATIONAL BOND - uniting with age groups other than one's own.

MYTHS - misconceptions which have been passed down through the generations.

OPAQUENESS - inability of an object to let light pass through.

PERIPHERAL VISION - sight restricted to what is directly in front of a person.

RHEUMATISM - any of various painful conditions of the joints and muscles.

STEREOTYPES - over-simplified mental pictures or judgements about people which overlook individual differences.

INTEGRATING HUMAN DEVELOPMENT OF AGING
INTO THE HOME ECONOMICS CLASSROOM

In order to establish better communication with elderly people, it is imperative that the elderly be understood. In order to do this, high school home economics students need statistical information to get a good overall view of the elderly population. They need to be aware of the biological changes the elderly undergo, to experience or relate to what these changes are like and to be given suggestions as to how they can involve themselves in helping the elderly compensate for these changes. High school students should also be familiarized with myths and stereotypes of the aged and aging so they may formulate more positive attitudes of their own. An understanding of myths and stereotypes also allows them to approach a relationship with an elderly person without a built-in bias.

By acquiring more positive attitudes, high school students can contribute to the reduction of negative societal attitudes. They can then make more conscious efforts to treat the elderly in their families and their communities with respect and to include the elderly in various social and community activities. This will, in turn, help raise the elderly's self-concept. Other uses of this information by home economics high school students involve possible paid or volunteer job opportunities. For instance, students could volunteer or be paid for providing companionship to elderly friends and neighbors. Paid elderly-related jobs, such as

housekeeping aide, activity director aide, social service aide, food service aide, or transportation worker are also available. There are other paid jobs for high school students in which they do not work exclusively with the elderly, but do have direct contact with the public which includes the elderly. This job market for high school students includes jobs such as working as a clerk or cashier at grocery, department, shoe and clothing stores; gas stations, repair shops, laundromats, motels and theaters; and fast food establishments and restaurants. Knowledge of the elderly in each and every one of these jobs would be beneficial to students whether they are presently employed or if they plan to get a job in the future.

Human development of the aging can be integrated into existing human development classes as the different concepts arise. For example, when discussing the biological changes of other age groups, those of the aging population can be included. Another method of integrating human development of the aging into the home economics curriculum is to teach all the human development-related aspects of the aging as one short unit. A third method could be teaching the human development-related aspects of the aging as a part of an integral home economics course about the aging. Aging is a stage in the life cycle, just as is child development and there are enough materials available on aging to devote an entire course to it.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT OF AGING

Aging is a process everyone is going through which begins at birth and ends with death. Its process includes biological, sociological, and psychological changes an individual undergoes throughout the life cycle. The study of this aging process and the problems of the aged is known as gerontology. When talking about and addressing problems of the aged, it is generally focused on the population of those people 65 years old and older. This age is not used because of any actual changes which take place in the individual, but because in the past, society has established 65 as the age of retirement. (Presently, 70 is the designated age of retirement in our society.)

The elderly population includes everyone from 65 to approximately 120 years of age, a larger span of years than any other group in the life cycle including infancy, preschool, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood and middle-age. The major characteristic of this population termed "the elderly," "the aged," "the aging," "senior citizens," "older adults," etc. is that they are extremely individualistic. It is impossible to describe the characteristics of a single group in the life cycle who may have as many or even more than 55 years between the youngest and the oldest person in the group.

Because the aged includes such a wide range of ages and because each person is so individualistic, these materials

will concentrate on the "normal" and the "typical" elderly person. By no means are the characteristics, problems and experiences discussed common to all elderly persons. Everyone is affected by the sequence of events experienced throughout their lives, their historical background, ethnic and racial group, health, occupation, socioeconomic level and especially age, which make them unique and special individuals.

Myths and Stereotypes

Stereotypes are over-simplified mental pictures or judgements about people which overlook individual differences. Although many elderly may exhibit certain characteristics, one must not assume that all elderly have all the same characteristics.

Myths are misconceptions which have been passed down through the generations. They exist for any group of people who are not the dominant society. If much is not known about an age group, society has the tendency to make something up. Gerontologists are professionals who study the process and problems of aging and the aged. In earlier times, much of the research they did was on those elderly who were ill and institutionalized. All the data were gathered on these people, not on the well and independent elderly person; therefore, some of the myths were begun by gerontologists themselves.

Myth of Unproductivity

The myth of unproductivity is always associated with old age. This myth says the elderly cannot or do not produce or contribute on a job, socially, or within a community. The elderly are presumed to be disengaged or withdrawn from the concerns and activities involved in life. In most instances when health and society permits it, elderly people are concerned and active citizens.

A home economics teacher can disprove this myth of unproductivity to the class by asking senior citizens in as resource persons in home economics-related areas. Rarely are they called upon to share their vast knowledge and experience in areas such as foods (growing, canning and preparing), hand sewing (needlepoint, crocheting, knitting, and embroidery), human development (raising children, living with a marriage partner, or even their own experiences of middle-aged and later life). Many elderly people have held home economics-related occupations for many years and would be pleased to share some of their experiences with classes. This learning experience for the class would be three-fold. 1) It would provide information on the subject matter currently being covered in class; 2) it would give the class an opportunity to formulate positive attitudes regarding elderly people; and 3) it would allow an elderly person to become active in the community and raise his/her feeling of self-worth.

Myth of Senility

Another myth which goes along with the myth of unproductivity is the myth that all old people are "senile." The term senility is overused by laypeople as well as by doctors to explain the behavior and condition of the elderly. Sometimes emotional responses of older people such as depression, grief, and anxiety are labeled "senile," and thus considered chronic, untreatable states, when in fact, they can be treated. These behaviors and conditions could be the result of any of the multiple losses or role changes which confront elderly people, from retirement to the anticipation of death. The death of a marriage partner, friends, and relatives; the decline of their own physical health; the loss of a job by voluntary or forced retirement; the loss of status, prestige, and participation as a result of society's attitudes; and even the loss of buying power, can result in the elderly expending enormous amounts of energy in grieving and adapting. Treatment through counseling or just an "understanding ear" could help relieve many of these emotional responses. One must also remember not to mistake the auditory and visual sensory losses discussed later as signs of senility.

Institutionalization Myth

The common myth, that most older people are institutionalized, is not true as is clearly demonstrated later

in the subsection entitled "Factual Description of the Elderly Population." It points out that only four percent of the elderly population are living in institutions. Another myth regarding the housing of the elderly is that older parents want to live with their adult children. Generally speaking, this is not true. Older people prefer to live independently in their own homes as long as they are able.

Resistance to Change Myth

A popular myth also held about the elderly is the myth of resistance to change. One cannot deny that the adult character structure is relatively stable, but the ability to change depends more on personality traits one has acquired over a lifetime than it does on old age.

Everyone has a "fear of the unknown" to some degree. In the case of the elderly, because of their various sensory losses and other declines, they of course lean toward that with which they feel most comfortable and familiar. Looking back on the environmental changes this generation of elderly has undergone--from fusible interfacing to computerized grocery shopping, many elderly people have been successful in adapting to new methods, products, etc. once the new process or procedure has been explained in a manner which they can understand. Their willingness to change may improve when someone they know takes the time to explain new things to them.

Sexual Myth

Probably one of the most widely held myths about old people is that they are no longer interested or active in sexual relations. It is true that sexual interest will decrease, but in the majority of cases, it does not cease with the onset of old age.

Attitudes

Society

Generally speaking, American society has not been very supportive of persons who have reached retirement age. The spirit of the country has emphasized the measure of human worth in terms of productivity and power. This encourages older persons to view themselves as approaching a declining stage in the life cycle of less importance, which is only enforced by the media, cartoons, jokes, and negative attitudes held by society. This stage is characterized by a decline in senses, mobility, speed, reaction time and physical strength. Onto this realistic view, a feeling of decline in self-worth is unrightfully imposed on the elderly, resulting in poor self-concepts. After the elderly's self-concepts have been lowered in response to society's attitudes, they are often ignored and neglected by being excluded from many social and community activities.

Retirement is almost a guarantee of a smaller income than in earlier years. Even good retirement incomes are considerably less than incomes received when working. This decrease in income means a lesser life style for the elderly than they are accustomed to. It also takes from them even more activities, including those commonly associated with retirement, such as hobbies, entertainment, and travel. More essential expenses such as housing, food, and transportation are also limited by a decreased and fixed income.

Family

Starting with the family, stereotypes and negative attitudes can be eradicated by viewing the aged as a heterogeneous group with varying needs and orientations. The family can be an excellent resource to contribute to the well-being of an aging person. By the family including the elderly person in activities, it may in turn provide interaction and participation in satisfying and useful ways for the aging person. This interaction and participation will hopefully help in the replacement of lost roles of the elderly family member.

Factual Description of the Elderly Population

In 1977, approximately 11 percent of the total

population in the United States was 65 years old and older, amounting to 23.5 million people. By the year 2000, this population is expected to increase 35 percent to 32 million. For every 146 women 65 years and older, there were 100 men in 1977. Eleven percent of the white popultion, eight percent of the black population, and four percent of people of Spanish origin were 65 years old and over in 1977. Life expectancy of a child born in 1976 is 73 years.

Only four percent of the older people lived in an institutional setting in 1977. About 33 percent of all older persons lived alone or with nonrelatives; however, most older persons lived in a family setting in 1977.

The educational level in 1977 of elderly people was 9.5 years of school. The 1977 median household income was $9,309 for those 65 years old and older, compared to household incomes of $16,100 for those under 65 years old. About 15 percent of those 65 years old and older were below poverty level in 1976. Approximatiely 13 percent of older people were in the labor force in 1977, making up three percent of the United States labor force.

Biological Changes

The aged are confronted with many biological changes which gradually take place in their bodies, most of the changes being declines or losses of bodily functions.

Various adaptations must be made by the older person to compensate for these changes. Declines or losses commonly experienced by older persons are discussed below.

Sensory Losses

Vision deteriorates in several ways as one gets older. The pupil becomes smaller, letting less light into the retina. The most common eye disease of the aged is cataracts. It is characterized by a thin, cloudy coating over the lens of the eye, resulting in blurred, distorted vision. Another problem is the fading of some hues due to opaqueness (inability to let light pass through). This means an elderly person may have a more difficult time in identifying various colors. They may need assistance in selecting garments which are coordinated and go well together. Another change which takes place is reduced peripheral vision, meaning that vision is more restricted to seeing what is directly in front of them.

Vision problems tend to limit activities, both active and passive. They may prevent the enjoyment of travel, shopping, reading, television and hobbies, such as sewing. One of the most critical losses experienced by the elderly as a result of sensory declines is that of driving. Having to relinquish their driver's license means parting with a substantial amount of their independence. It also stifles their social life and increases their transportation costs

in a budget which cannot endure additional expenses.

Visual problems keep the older person from receiving visual information correctly or it may mean that the information is only partially received. It does not mean that they are not paying attention to what is going on around them.

This is often considered the most difficult physical handicap to which the older person must adjust. The elderly person may need assistance in grocery shopping, paying bills, or other homemaking tasks which are associated with fine visual detail.

Hearing becomes less sensitive with age, especially for high frequencies. Not only do older people decline in the ability to hear sounds, but they are slower to hear--to translate the meaning of sound, and to act in response to it. Older men typically experience a greater hearing difficulty than do older women.

Some elderly people need but do not want hearing aids, and others have them but will not use them because of the negative connotation they have. Another reason hearing aids are not used is that sometimes older people have a difficult time acknowledging their hearing losses. If elderly people are not willing to acknowledge a hearing problem, they may believe others are excluding them from their conversations or they may believe the other person is talking more softly, just so they cannot hear when

they are being spoken to. This situation may provide suspician and withdrawal on the part of the elderly person. The attitudes held by the elderly concerning these hearing problems must not be ridiculed or taken lightly. Instead, understanding and talking the problem out would be a more effective approach in changing their views and convincing them to receive medical attention.

A hearing loss can sometimes be complicated by background noises, such as those in a restaurant or in traffic. If a person wears a hearing aid to compensate for the hearing loss, they may still experience difficulty in hearing over the background noises. When a hearing aid is worn, not only is the volume of the conversation amplified, but the background noises increase as well.

Decreased hearing is a large contributing factor in limiting social interaction. This interaction is extremely important to the mental health of the elderly person. People with a hearing loss may appear to others to be disinterested, disoriented, "senile," or just not paying attention to what is going on around them. After recognizing a hearing problem, one can facilitate hearing of an older person by speaking clearly, distinctly, and loudly, especially when using letters such as s, ch, z and c. A person can also face the elderly person who is hard of hearing, enabling them to lip-read if they so desire. Sometimes the combination of partial hearing and lip-reading

is used to insure correct hearing.

A progressive loss of the sense of smell is quite common, as is loss of the sense of taste due to the diminishing number of taste buds. Adaptations must be made by the elderly person to overcome or compensate for both of these sensory losses.

Physical Mobility

Physical mobility limits an elderly person in getting from one place to another. It can be a simple movement such as getting from a chair to the kitchen or a more complex movement such as going fron one's house to downtown. This lack of movement could be due to transportation limitations, such as the inability to operate an automobile with the accompanying traffic and pedestrian hazards. Psychological limitations also affect one's mobility. Personal insecurities such as fear of criminal assaults or even architectural barriers, such as stairs, might be considered psychological limitations. Many of these impediments are imagined--others are real, but never the less, they present problems of mobility to the elderly.

Assistance to the elderly in more complex movements could be in the form of providing the actual transportation. Walking through the particular trip with the elderly person until they gain confidence would also be helpful. Often when elderly people go to an unfamiliar place, they like to have

someone along to help them get there the first time.

Health

Older people tend to have more health-related concerns which continue over a longer period of time, known as chronic conditions and fewer health-related concerns which are short-lived, known as acute conditions, than those occurring among the young. However, when the elderly are subjects of acute conditions, the conditions linger twice as long as compared to those who are middle-aged. Arthritis (inflammation of a joint or joints), rheumatism (any of various painful conditions of the joints and muscles) and heart conditions are chronic conditions producing the most disability among older people. Because of these chronic conditions, elderly people may be labeled by family, friends and even physicians as chronic complainers. By being aware and sensitive to an elderly friend or relative's special problem(s), an individual may provide comfort to the elderly person.

Learning and Intelligence

Learning may be defined as the relatively permanent modification in one's behavior, resulting from experience. Some factors which will affect learning are: problems in getting information into the nervous system (such as visual and hearing difficulties), how the elderly person perceives the information being learned, the controlling of their atten-

tion, their motivation to learn and their general health. The slowing of responses, the anxiety the learning situation offers, and especially the meaningfulness of the task also affect learning. These factors should not be confused as changes in the ability to learn directly resulting from age.

Studies have shown that the speed of learning for older persons is slower than the rate for younger persons. The information being learned should be introduced at a slower rate, and the older student should be given more time to absorb it after it has been introduced.

The attitude toward learning itself changes with age. All things being equal, older adults are less set, or ready, to learn than they used to be. Also, the desire to learn can be lost. Common opinions held by the elderly are, "I'm too old to take up something new."

Sometimes people speak of the elderly's intelligence decreasing with age. Not only does this provide a negative image of the elderly but it hurts their self-concept as well. Presently, studies of the effects of age on intelligence are not in agreement. Some show a decline in intelligence, others show a rise and still others show no change. Factors such as the learning deficits mentioned earlier and education levels have a great effect on intelligence tests. Until studies result in some consensus concerning this issue, it is important for us not to inflict personal opinions on high school students about the elderly or on the elderly themselves.

Reaction Time

One of the most noticeable changes related to age is the decline in the ability to quickly respond to a stimulus. This decline appears to occur in both complex or simple responses, and unintentional or planned responses. In adapting to this decline, the elderly must learn to pace themselves according to their slower reactions. For example, in driving a car, elderly people know they cannot stop quickly, so they begin to slow down long before approaching an intersection.

LEARNING ACTIVITY
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT OF AGING

1. Define gerontology.

2. What is the major characteristic of the elderly population?

3. Why is it impossible to accurately describe the elderly as a population?

4. Name four factors which affect an individual throughout his/her life and makes him/her a unique individual.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

5. Why were some of the myths about elderly people begun by gerontologists?

6. List four of the commonly held myths about older people.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

7. What percentage of elderly people were living in an institutional setting in 1977?

8. Fill in the word chronic or acute in the following blanks.

   Older people tend to have more _____health-related concerns and fewer_____health-related concerns than those occurring among the young. When the elderly are subjects of _____conditions, the condition lingers twice as long as compared to those who are middle-aged. Because of _____conditions, elderly people may be labeled habitual complainers by family, friends, and/or physicians.

9. Name five factors which affect learning.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

   e.

10. How might role losses or changes relate to what some people and doctors call "senility"?

INTEGRATING HOUSING FOR THE AGING INTO THE HOME ECONOMICS CLASSROOM

There are many simple and inexpensive modifications which can easily be made by the elderly to make their living environment more comfortable. High school home economics students should realize their potential in contributing to more comfortable living arrangements for elderly relatives and/or people within their community. Not only does this accomplish the obvious task of helping an elderly person, but it also creates an intergenerational bond (uniting with age groups other than one's own) and provides involvement for the high school student within the family and/or community.

High school students also need to become aware of the adaptations which can be made to compensate for the elderly's sensory losses. High school students can be rather creative in thinking of inexpensive gadgets which may aid comfortable and independent living. They may even choose to create their own inventions.

Housing for the aging can be integrated into existing housing classes as the different concepts arise. For example, when teaching floor coverings, special adaptations or suggestions for the elderly's homes can be mentioned. Another method to use in integrating housing for the aging into the home economics curriculum is to pull all the

housing-related aspects of the aging together and teach a short unit. A third way could be to teach housing-related aspects of the aging as an integral part of a home economics course about aging.

HOUSING FOR THE AGING

All of us are influenced by our environment, especially the elderly. Many older people are confined to their homes for physical reasons, others are homebound because of transportation problems, finances, lack of friends, or lack of places to go. Whatever the reason, the elderly spend many hours in the home. Therefore, efforts should be made for simple and inexpensive modifications to make them as comfortable as possible in their own domain. In addition to being comfortable, housing for the aging should be aesthetically pleasing and safe.

To help compensate for the elderly's failing vision, homes of the elderly should have twice the light a person with normal vision would have. This is especially true for frequently used areas such as work centers in the kitchen and reading areas in the living room or bedroom. When additional light fixtures are purchased and installed to provide extra lighting for an elderly person, considerations should be made regarding the ease of replacing the light bulbs. Some light fixtures have the special feature of being able to pull the fixture down away from the ceiling. This enables the elderly person to change the bulb without having to stand in a chair. Wall fixtures and lamps also provide alternatives to ceiling fixtures and should be considered to reduce the chances of an elderly person

falling from changing light bulbs.

Older people perceive sounds differently as they increase in age. Not only should sounds such as door bells, alarms and telephones be louder, but they also need to be lower in pitch.

Hazardous odors such as smoke, dangerous gas fumes or burning electrical wiring become more difficult to detect as people grow older. For this reason, periodic inspections should be made of the heating system, chimneys, and flues. A good investment for elderly people to consider would be a smoke alarm or smoke detector. They are relatively inexpensive and may save the elderly person's life or personal property. It may also be helpful for a younger person with a keen sense of smell to be available on a periodic basis to detect unpleasant odors such as mildew and mustiness.

The sensitivity to temperature also declines as one grows older. This is especially true of cool temperatures. The older person's body is less capable of adapting; therefore, the suggested thermostat setting of 65°F in the winter should not be imposed upon older people.

When the sense of touch becomes less acute, the elderly person is subject to more frequent burns. Long fireproof oven mitts in the kitchen provide protection to hands and arms when reaching in the oven. Reducing the hot water temperature to 110°F decreases the chances of scalding and also saves money on utility bills.

The slight loss of agility, the arthritis and the stiff joints experienced by older adults place limitations on mobility around the home. For this reason, shag carpeting and slick floor surfaces should be avoided. If throw rugs must be used, they should be sprayed on the back with a non-skid spray or put over a piece of non-skid material. Sharp corners, such as counter edges, can also be dangerous. Ease in accessibility to electrical outlets can be provided by running extension cords high above baseboards. Windows, doors and drawers should be easy to open and close.

Modern technology has produced numerous gadgets and mechanical devices which can support independent living for the elderly by decreasing the need for mobility. Unfortunately, an older person's fixed income must be considered. This does not always allow for luxuries such as remote television control, telephone jacks at convenient points throughout the house, and garbage disposals.

Kitchen storage should be arranged for ease in accessibility. Lazy susan turntables or revolving shelves, pull-out shelves, hanging utensils and pull-out pantries make kitchens more accessible. In the bathroom, skid-proof adhesives or non-slip rubber mats and grabbars or handrails installed in and around the bathtub prevent accidents and provide a sense of security.

The physical limitations resulting from age-related changes often cause difficulties in housekeeping. For instance, not only do vision impairments make dust and dirt

harder to locate but after cleaning an area or object, it may appear to be clean when it is not. Stiff joints, loss of muscle power and lack of energy also compound the difficulty of housekeeping tasks.

Because of these declines, the elderly may need assistance in "seeing" the areas which need cleaning, or they may need someone to help them do the cleaning itself. This type of assistance permits the elderly to remain independent in their own homes longer.

Just as the elderly pace themselves in driving to compensate for their slower reactions, they may also pace themselves in housekeeping. Where an elderly person used to thoroughly clean the house in one day, now he/she may spread the housekeeping tasks over several days.

In addition to housing adaptations and problems with housekeeping, another concern of elderly people is choosing appropriate housing. Because of the numerous living alternatives the elderly have from which to choose, the choice can be a difficult one. The first decision which must be made by the elderly person(s) and/or their family is what <u>major</u> alternative living arrangement is best suited for them.

There are four major choices which are primarily concerned with the degree of dependence/independence which the elderly person has or can achieve. Naturally, it is best for the person to be as independent as possible, with-

out taking on more independence than they can successfully handle. Each major choice has varying amounts of physical, financial, social and emotional dependence/independence. The four major choices are 1) independent retirement living arrangement, 2) group living retirement, 3) retirement homes with progressive care, and 4) living with children.

Once the elderly person has chosen which major living arrangement is best for them, they must then make another decision. Which particular apartment, home community, retirement home, etc. best suits their needs. If they choose an independent retirement living arrangement, the alternatives include 1) keeping their present home, 2) renting an apartment, 3) building or buying a retirement "dream" house, 4) buying a mobile home, 5) living in a residential hotel or 6) buying into a retirement community. Of course, the advantages and disadvantages are different for each individual. To one person, a consideration could be an advantage and to another, the same consideration could be a disadvantage. For example, age segregation (living with people who are in the same age range as oneself) could be desired by one elderly person for various reasons. Another elderly person may find age segregation a disadvantage because they prefer interaction with people who are younger (age integration). Before making a decision on appropriate living arrangements, each individual must weigh the pros and cons of each housing alternative, according to their personal wants, needs, likes and dislikes.

LEARNING ACTIVITY
HOUSING FOR THE AGING

1. To compensate for the elderly's failing vision, their lighting should be _____ that of a person with normal vision.

2. Name two types of light fixtures which should be considered when purchasing light fixtures for or by the elderly.

   a.

   b.

3. Name three things which make housekeeping tasks more difficult for the elderly.

   a.

   b.

   c.

The intergenerational bond previously mentioned can be further carried out by high school home economics students working with their elderly friends and/or relatives in planning, preparing and serving meals. To be able to do this, the high school student must be aware of the special considerations which differ from their own nutrition requirements. The caloric need, special diets and effects of various aging factors must be considered. The student should also be exposed to other considerations which are nonnutritional, such as equipment and storage available, in order to assist the elderly in planning and/or preparing meals. The students may feel a sense of pride and accomplishment in contributing to the well-being of elderly people by encouraging them to follow better nutrition practices.

High school students may find they are valuable resource people for the elderly in grocery shopping as well. The students may also be interested in seeking paid or volunteer jobs in food preparation for the elderly at nursing homes, retirement homes or local meal programs for senior citizens.

If an elderly person is in need of better nutrition, they may not be aware of community meal programs offered expecially for them. High school students could inquire about these programs, provide the information to their elderly friends and/or relatives and encourage them to participate.

Food and nutrition of aging can be integrated into existing food and nutrition classes as the different topics arise. For example, while talking about calories, meal planning, and special diets, the needs and variations of elderly people could be injected. Another method of integrating food and nutrition for the aging into the home economics curriculum is to teach all the food and nutrition-related aspects of the aging as one short unit. A third method could be teaching the food and nutrition-related aspects of the aging as an integral part of a home economics course about aging.

Most body processes slow down with aging because of the decrease in the number of working cells. Nutrients are distributed less efficiently by the blood stream and less secretions are made which aid in bodily functions. Adequate amounts of liquid and fiber can aid digestion problems created by these physical changes.

Special Diets

Limited intakes of sodium and cholesterol are necessary in the diets of many aged people. High salt intakes have been shown to contribute to high blood pressure, heart failure and other health problems. Food high in salt such as salted peanuts, bacon and corn chips should be avoided and salt at the table should be used sparingly or avoided altogether.

Cholesterol is essential in the body for various functions; however, a high cholesterol level may contribute to heart disease. If an elderly person is informed by a doctor of a high cholesterol level, foods high in cholesterol must be limited or avoided. Only animal foods such as meats, whole milk, eggs, and ice cream contain cholesterol. Alternative foods to be emphasized in place of animal foods are those of plant origin, such as legumes, nuts, fruits, vegetables, cereal, and grains.

Another diet common to the elderly is one suitable for

those who have diabetes. Diabetes is a condition characterized by the body's inability to burn consumed carbohydrates (starches and sugars) efficiently. Meal plans for diabetics are designed by a doctor to suit their individual needs. A diet for a diabetic person is often the most difficult for the elderly to manage because of their strong preference for sugar and starchy foods which are inexpensive, quick and easy to prepare and consume.

Meal Planning Considerations

When planning meals for or with the elderly, there are considerations which need to be made in order to insure that the meals will be carried out as planned. Of course, planning in accordance to the basic four food groups is important for good nutrition of the elderly, as it is for any age person. One must also consider the caloric reduction in an older person's diet. They require fewer calories than a younger adult due to the decrease in the basal metabolic rate. Fewer foods high in fat and carbohydrates should be eaten.

Special nonnutrition-related questions one needs to ask about the elderly person and consider when planning meals for or with them are:

*Who plans, shops, and prepares the meals?

*What equipment and storage is available?

*What are the elderly person's food habits and preferences?

*What is the educational level of the person whom you are dealing with?

*How much money does the person have to spend on food?

*What kind of meal programs are available in the community?

One would not plan elaborate meals from "scratch" for an elderly man who cannot read recipes and who has never cooked before. Neither would a person plan for the elderly man to purchase fresh broccoli when 1) he does not particularly care for broccoli, 2) he has no place to store fresh broccoli, and/or 3) his budget does not allow for such extravagances.

Problems Affecting Nutrition of the Elderly

Limited income affects the purchase of adequate amounts of the right kinds of food. Often income also dictates storage and preparation facilities.

Loss of teeth or ill-fitting dentures can create difficulty in chewing foods. Compensation can be made for this difficulty by planning foods that are softer in texture or those foods which can be blended or chopped. However, a diet which consists of all soft foods may not be appetizing to an elderly person day after day. Other foods could be cut into very small pieces to provide a variety in texture.

Because of the decrease in the sense of smell and fewer taste buds, extra seasoning may be needed in order for elderly people to enjoy their food. However, since salt has

a high sodium content, it should not be increased. Seasonings which can be used in place of salt are thyme, sage, garlic and mustard. Flavorings such as vinegar and lemon juice are also good. Diminished acuity of sight and smell also reduces the appetite and intake of food.

Other factors reduce the appetite and intake of food, leading to improper nutrition. One of these factors is illness. When one is sick, there is little desire to get up and prepare a meal for oneself. Another factor is loneliness, also characterized by lack of motivation to plan, prepare and eat a meal for only one person. About one-third of all older Americans live alone, most of whom are women. In our society, eating is a social occasion, a time to gather with family and friends and a time to discuss and share thoughts with one another. Some believe the social interaction which takes place at mealtime is almost as important as eating. For this interaction, congregate meals served in centers for older Americans are excellent. Congregate meals also insure that the older person is provided with at least one well-balanced meal per day, five days a week. Some meal programs even provide transportation for elderly persons to the meal site. For those older persons who are home-bound, home-delivered meals are provided by community organizations in some cities. Meals-on-Wheels is an example of home-delivered meals. They are nutritious meals delivered to homebound persons aged 60 and over who are unable to shop or cook for themselves.

Decreases in strength and energy make shopping and preparation of food more difficult. When one does not feel like shopping and preparing food, he/she only grows weaker from poor eating habits.

LEARNING ACTIVITY
FOOD AND NUTRITION FOR THE AGING

1. Foods from what origin can be used as alternatives in planning a diet for an elderly person with a high cholesterol level?

2. Why is a diabetic diet so difficult for an elderly person to follow? Give three reasons.

   a.

   b.

   c.

3. Name three nonnutrition-related reasons one might not plan fresh artichokes out of season in an elderly person's diet.

   a.

   b.

   c.

4. Name three compensations which can be made for the difficulty in chewing foods created by the loss of teeth or ill-fitting dentures.

   a.

   b.

   c.

INTEGRATING CLOTHING FOR THE AGING INTO THE HOME ECONOMICS CLASSROOM

When high school home economics students have elderly relatives living with them, they are in a prime position to help the elderly in the area of clothing. High school students could also use knowledge of clothing to obtain paid or volunteer jobs in altering, designing or constructing garments for the elderly. It would also be of value to those who work as salespeople since it would enable them to better help elderly people select their clothing.

High school students need to be familiar with the types of alterations or pattern changes needed as a result of changing body proportions brought on by age. They need to know types of fabrics which are best and styles and design features which are most appealing to the elderly.

Clothing for the aging can be integrated into existing clothing classes as the different topics arise. For example, when discussing alterations, types of fabrics or style, suggestions or adaptations for the elderly can be made. Another method of integrating clothing for the aging into the home economics curriculum is to teach all the clothing-related aspects of the aging as one short unit. A third method could be teaching the clothing-related aspects of the aging as an integral part of a home economics course about aging.

CLOTHING FOR THE AGING

It is a well known fact that clothing is intimately related to one's personal appearance and extremely important in social relationships, regardless of age. Not only does clothing influence others, but an attractive appearance raises self-esteem, lifts morale and can be a source of personal satisfaction.

Contrary to the stereotype that the elderly are careless about their clothing and appearance, older people do maintain their interest in clothing and appearance. Often, older people work even harder at being attractive to compensate for some loss of physical attractiveness.

The changing body proportions of people as they age present fitting problems when the elderly select their clothing. There is likely to be a loss in height from spinal changes. The waistline almost disappears, arms are usually fuller, abdomen and hips expand, and legs become thinner. This means many older people no longer fit into standard sizes and have difficulty finding clothes that fit.

Older people may prefer to wear lightweight clothing due to their loss of strength and the fact that they may tire easily. Lightweight clothing also makes dressing and undressing less of a strenuous activity for the older person.

Because of thin and sensitive skin, soft, smooth fabrics should be chosen to reduce skin irritation. Clothing should

be free of rough, bulky seams. Increased skin sensitivity also calls for all detergent residue to be throughly rinsed from clothing when laundering.

Because of changes in skin tones, flattering colors for garments may differ from those which were worn in earlier years. Very loose or full garments or those which are too long should be avoided since they could easily throw an older person off balance if caught in a door. Such clothing could also easily catch on fire when leaning over a hot stove or heater. Acetates and rayons are more susceptible to flammability than other fibers and therefore should be avoided by the elderly when selecting clothing.

Many elderly women, especially handicapped elderly women, prefer shift-style, one-piece dresses with semi-fitted waists, A-line skirts, lowered necklines, short raglan sleeves or straight sleeves without cuffs. They also like zippers and large button fasteners and long center-front closures. Closures of nylon hook and loop tape provide easy opening and closing--especially for those who experience stiff joints or arthritic fingers.

When shopping for clothing, elderly women usually look for garments which are comfortable, easy to get into and out of, and easy to launder and care for. They also want clothing which is becoming in style and attractive in color.

Because of arthritis in his fingers, an elderly man might prefer a "clip-on" tie which is pretied as opposed to

a regular tie. Ease in dressing can also be facilitated by wearing slip-on shoes rather than those which lace up. Closures of nylon hook and loop tape can replace buttons on men's shirts, but still give the appearance of a buttoned shirt. All of these suggestions will make it easier for an elderly man to dress and undress himself, without asking for assistance from others.

LEARNING ACTIVITY
CLOTHING FOR THE AGING

1. Give four reasons why many older people no longer fit into standard sized clothing.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

2. Dressing and undressing becomes less strenuous when wearing _____.

3. Fully describe the styles of clothing and types of closures which an elderly handicapped woman might prefer.

4. Other than fit, what are four features an elderly woman usually looks for when shopping for clothing?

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

INTEGRATING CONSUMER PROBLEMS OF THE AGING INTO THE HOME ECONOMICS CLASSROOM

Because of the elderly's vulnerability to consumer fraud and deception, we should make every effort we can to educate the elderly regarding common swindles. A very effective way to do this, because of its informality, would be via the high school home economics student. High school students may not have all the answers all the time for the elderly, but they can be educated to know where they or the elderly person can obtain the needed information.

By explaining reasons for vulnerability of elderly people toward fraudulent acts and misleading claims, the high school student will better understand an elderly person. The high school student will then not just say the elderly are "stupid" or "crazy" for falling for such a gimmick. The high school student can caution the elderly person in advance instead of after it is too late. For instance, when a salesperson comes to an elderly person's door, the high school student could advise the elderly person to tell the salesperson to return when others are around or to tell him/her that they are not interested at all. The high school student could also stress to the elderly that they must be firm and "stick to their guns," not letting the salesperson convince them differently.

Consumer problems of the aging can be integrated into existing consumer education classes when discussing fraudu-

lent acts and misleading claims. Another method of integrating consumer problems of the aging into the home economics curriculum is to teach the consumer problems-related aspects of the aging as one short unit. A third method could be teaching the consumer problems-related aspects of the aging as an integral part of a home economics course about aging.

CONSUMER PROBLEMS OF THE AGING

Elderly people are particularly vulnerable to consumer fraud and deception. Illegal operators and hit-and-run peddlers entice elderly people into various schemes, taking as little as several dollars of their limited budget or as much as depriving them of their entire life savings. There are several reasons which must be understood in order for an individual to deal with consumer protection for elderly people.

Reasons for Vulnerability

Older people for one, are more lonely. Therefore, they are more willing to talk to people who come by, such as door-to-door salespeople and to people who call and offer to give them free demonstrations.

Because some older people remain isolated a good deal of the time, they may lose contact with the outside world and with activities outside their immediate environment. Therefore, elderly people may not be aware of legislation which has been enacted that would affect their consumer decisions. Also, they may be aware of legislation but may not understand its implications.

Many older people live in the inner city where the crime rate is high and there is a problem with security. So because of fear, they may be attracted to gimmick security systems.

Due to their increasing number of ailments and their lack of energy, often elderly people turn to miracle cures or common fads. They have a difficult time passing up a hope for pain relief, especially for chronic illnesses such as arthritis or cancer. Usually older people cannot afford these gimmicks; Some spend the last of their money, and others obligate themselves for money they do not have.

Contracts and other legal matters can be complex and confusing, especially to widows who have never dealt with business contracts before. Older people have many legal matters which need to be handled, such as selling a home, insurance, and drawing up a will.

Income and inflation also affect elderly persons' consumer habits. Their fixed and limited incomes allow no room for wasted money. But because of their lower incomes, they tend to jump at "bargains" and "save money" gimmicks.

Fraudulent Acts and Misleading Claims

Often peddlers suggest to the elderly that proper medical diagnosis and treatment would be too expensive. Peddlers suggest instead that elderly people turn to the new "astounding discoveries" to eliminate their health problems. Although some of the drugs are not actually harmful, they do not do any good.

Another deceptive offer is that of making a profit for easy spare time work. The catch to this scheme is that

before the person can start making a profit, they must pay money in order to receive the details, invest in inventory, or purchase equipment such as a vending maching. Prior to investing their money, the elderly should be encouraged to talk with their banker or the Better Business Bureau.

Many land development schemes offer full retirement communities in a warm climate. Often these offers are advertised by a mail-order land developer. Often these "lands in the sun" opportunities end up being "planned" communities in the middle of a desert or swamp. Before purchasing land, elderly people should consult with a lawyer or a real estate agent. They may also contact the proper state agency where the land is located or the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Some of the other dangers the elderly should beware of are dancing instruction, referral selling, correspondence schools and insurance sales. Obviously, all of these type offers do not involve questionable ethics. However, these are the most common swindles requiring caution on the part of elderly.

Dance studios sometimes use unethical high pressure sales tactics on the elderly. Selling schemes include bogus contests, fanciful testimonials, and sales tactics in which teams of salespeople work in relays to batter down the elderly person's resistance.

Referral selling leads the buyer to believe that by giving the seller names of friends as prospects, the buyer will get a discount on what he/she is buying, depending on the number of friends who buy the product. Sometimes the buyer pays more for the product than a reputable merchant would charge.

Another swindle that the elderly should be cautious of is a few correspondence schools who are only interested in getting the student's money. Advertisements often skip over requirements a student must have and dwells on high salaried jobs available to graduates. This may be especially attractive to an elderly person who is looking for a part-time job to supplement his/her income.

Elderly people are often approached to buy insurance policies which they either do not need, cannot afford, or both. They are told, regardless of how much insurance they have, that they do not have enough. Salespeople may plan on an elderly person's "sense of security," especially when trying to sell a health insurance policy. They may mention the chance of the elderly person losing his/her home or life savings all because of an extended illness or stay in the hospital that the elderly person might have. The elderly may be convinced, sign a contract and put down a deposit before realizing that they are overextending their budget.

The Federal Trade Commission should be consulted regarding the above mentioned or any other fraudulent acts or misleading claims before senior citizens have lost their money. Punishment of law violators is a small compensation to an elderly person who has already lost his/her money.

LEARNING ACTIVITY
CONSUMER PROBLEMS OF THE AGING

1. Give four reasons that make the elderly more vulnerable to consumer fraud than their younger counterparts.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

2. List three people and/or agencies an older person might consult before purchasing land.

   a.

   b.

   c.

3. What is referral selling?

SUMMARY

The United States' population of older people is 11 percent and growing. These people have needs and concerns which must be met by society, one of which is societal acceptance. Society needs to be more sensitive and supportive of the older population. By society viewing older people with more positive attitudes, older people will feel they are valued and that there is a place in society for them.

By teaching about aging in the areas of human development, housing, food and nutrition, clothing and consumer problems, high school home economics students will be able to establish meaningful intergenerational relationships with the elderly. They will be better able to be supportive of the elderly. Teaching about aging in the home economics classroom will also give the home economics high school student an opportunity to become an active citizen in the community. He/she will also encounter the opportunity to use the knowledge in dealing with elderly people every day in jobs they presently hold or may hold in the future.

There are three major methods in which aging can be integrated into the high school home economics curriculum. Each subject matter section can be integrated into existing home economics classes as the different concepts or topics in which aging is related arise. A home economics teacher can also integrate one or more of the sections into the home

economics curriculum by teaching them as separate short units within their respective home economics classes. For instance, a separate short unit on clothing for the aging could be integrated into a home economics clothing class. The teacher can also develop and teach an entire home economics course about the aging. In it would be included the human development-, housing-, food and nutrition-, clothing-, and consumer problems- related aspects and concerns for and of the aging.

As home economics teachers, we have spent too little time in teaching this last stage of the life cycle. It is not too late to start and as you can see, there is a lot to be gained by the student, the elderly and even our own personal relationships with the elderly.

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APPENDIX A

LEARNING ACTIVITY ANSWER KEYS

LEARNING ACTIVITY ANSWER KEY
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

1. Define gerontology.

   The study of the aging process and the problems of the aged is known as gerontology.

2. What is the major characteristic of the elderly population?

   They are extremely individualistic.

3. Why is it impossible to accurately describe the elderly as a population?

   Because it includes a larger span of years than any other group in the life cycle.

4. Name four factors which affect an individual throughout his/her life and makes him/her a unique individual.

   a. sequence of events experienced throughout his/her life

   b. historical background

   c. ethnic and racial group

   d. health

   e. occupation

   f. socioeconomic level

   g. age

5. Why were some of the myths about elderly people begun by gerontologists?

   Because in earlier times, much of the research done by gerontologists was done on those elderly who were ill and institutionalized. All the data were gathered on these people, not on the well and independent elderly person.

6. List five of the commonly held myths about older people.

   a. myth of unproductivity

   b. myth of senility

c. institutionalization myth

d. resistance to change myth

e. sexual myth

7. What percentage of elderly people were living in an institutional setting in 1977?

4%

8. Fill in the word chronic or acute in the following blanks.

Older people tend to have more chronic health-related concerns and fewer acute health-related concerns than those occuring among the young. When the elderly are subjects of acute conditions, the condition lingers twice as long as compared to those who are middle-aged. Because of chronic conditions, elderly people may be labeled habitual complainers by family, friends, and/or physicians.

9. Name four factors which affect learning.

a. problems in getting information into the nervous system

b. how the elderly person perceives the information being learned

c. the controlling of their attention

d. motivation to learn

e. general health

f. slowing of responses

g. the anxiety the learning situation offers

h. the meaningfulness of the task

10. How might role losses or changes relate to what some people and doctors call senility?

Often older people experience depression, grief, and anxiety as a result of the loss or change of a role (spouse, friend, job, status, income, etc.) which may appear as senility, when in fact, the behavior is not senility, but a treatable condition.

LEARNING ACTIVITY ANSWER KEY
HOUSING FOR THE AGING

1. To compensate for the elderly's failing vision, their lighting should be twice that of a person with normal vision.

2. Name two types of light fixtures which should be considered when purchasing light fixtures for or by the elderly.

   a. light fixtures with the special "pull down" feature

   b. wall fixtures

   c. lamps

3. Name three things which make housekeeping tasks more difficult for the elderly.

   a. visual impairments

   b. stiff joints

   c. loss of muscle power

   d. lack of energy

LEARNING ACTIVITY ANSWER KEY
FOOD AND NUTRITION FOR THE AGING

1. Foods from what origin can be used as alternatives in planning a diet for an elderly person with a high cholesterol level?

   Those foods of plant origin--legumes, nuts, fruits, vegetables, cereals, and grains.

2. Why is a diabetic diet so difficult for an elderly person to follow? Give three reasons.

   a. because sugar and starchy foods are inexpensive

   b. because they are quick and easy to prepare

   c. because they are quick and easy to consume

3. Name three nonnutrition-related reasons one might not plan fresh artichokes out of season in an elderly person's diet.

   a. because he/she does not care for artichokes

   b. because he/she has no place to store fresh artichokes

   c. because his/her budget does not allow for such extravagances

4. Name three compensations which can be made for the difficulty in chewing foods created by the loss of teeth or ill-fitting dentures.

   a. planning foods softer in texture

   b. planning for foods which can be blended

   c. planning for foods which can be chopped

   d. cutting food into very small pieces

LEARNING ACTIVITY ANSWER KEY
CLOTHING FOR THE AGING

1. Give four reasons why many older people no longer fit into standard sized clothing.

   a. loss in stature from spinal changes

   b. diminishing waistline

   c. fuller arms

   d. expanding abdomen and hips

   e. thinner legs

2. Dressing and undressing becomes less strenuous when wearing lightweight clothing.

3. Fully describe the styles of clothing and types of closures which an elderly handicapped woman might prefer.

   A garment a handicapped elderly person might prefer to wear might be shift-style, a one-piece dress with semi-fitted waist, or an A-line skirt. It might have a lowered neckline, short raglan sleeves or straight sleeves without cuffs. The fasteners would be either a zipper, large buttons or nylon hook and loop tape. A center-front opening is also preferred.

4. Other than fit, what are four features an elderly woman usually looks for when shopping for clothing?

   a. comfort

   b. easy to get into and out of

   c. easy to launder and care for

   d. becoming in style

   e. attractive in color

LEARNING ACTIVITY ANSWER KEY
CONSUMER PROBLEMS OF THE AGING

1. Give four reasons that make the elderly more vulnerable to consumer fraud than their younger counterparts.

   a. loneliness

   b. lack of awareness of legislation

   c. fear of crime

   d. failing health

   e. greater need to deal with contracts

   f. reduced income and inflation

2. List three people and/or agencies an older person might consult before purchasing land.

   a. lawyer

   b. real estate agent

   c. proper state agency where land is located

   d. Department of Housing and Urban Development

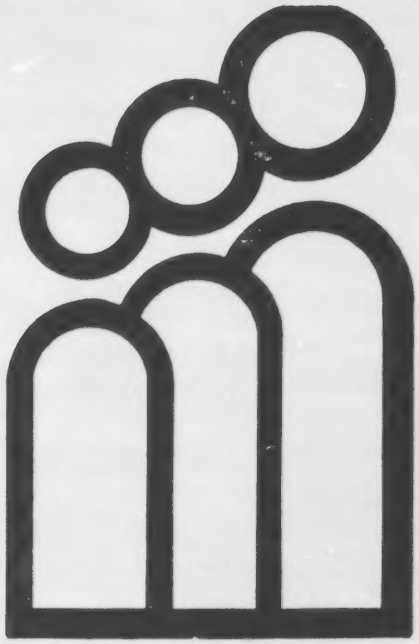
   e. Federal Trade Commission

3. What is referral selling?

   Referral selling leads the buyer to believe that by giving the seller names of friends as prospects, the buyer will get a discount on what he/she is buying, depending on the number of friends who buy the product.

PART II

CURRICULUM ON AGING FOR THE HOME ECONOMICS CLASSROOM



Human Development

UNIT I: Conceptual Structure

I. Human Development

A. Myths and Stereotypes

1. Derivation

2. Types of

a. Unproductivity Myth

b. Myth of Senility

c. Institutionalization Myth

d. Resistance to Change Myth

e. Sexual Myth

B. Sociology of Aging

1. Role Changes

a. Retirement

b. Widowhood

c. Dependency

2. Societal Attitudes

3. Family Attitudes

C. Statistical Information

1. Age - Chronological Identification

2. Population

a. Totals

b. Sex

c. Race

3. Life Expectancy

4. Nature of Habitat

a. Family Structure

b. Alone and with Friends

c. Institutional Setting

5. Economics

a. Income

b. Employment

D. Biological Changes

1. Sensory Losses

a. Vision

b. Hearing

c. Touch

d. Taste and Smell

2. Physical Mobility

3. Health

4. Learning and Intelligence

5. Reaction Time

UNIT I: Generalizations

1. Various myths about aging and the aged result in a negative effect on attitudes of society as well as those of the elderly person.

2. Statistical information about the aged facilitates understanding of the elderly population.

3. Recognition of individual differences unique to each elderly person promotes a better understanding of the elderly.

4. The lives of elderly are affected by certain physiological, psychological and sociological changes which take place during the aging process.

UNIT I: Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. distinguish between certain myths and facts about aging;
2. identify statistical information about the elderly population and its implications;
3. analyze the unique characteristics which make up each elderly individual and the effects these differences have on that individual;
4. describe the physiological, psychological and sociological changes associated with the aging process and their implications.

UNIT I: Competencies

The student will be able to:

1. recognize the physiological, psychological and sociological needs and concerns of elderly people when dealing with them through jobs and daily encounters.
2. develop better relationships in their jobs and in daily encounters with the elderly through a better understanding of the aging process.

UNIT I: Resources

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UNIT 1

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 1

TO THE TEACHER:

Give out human development activity sheet number 1. Have students fill out as quickly as possible. Take handout up and compile a list of the students' answers. Discuss the students' feelings about each topic. Ask the class if there are any phrases in the list that are stereotypes of the elderly.

ACTIVITY 1

Fill in the blanks below with your ideas about what is "young" and "old".

YOUNG		OLD
_____	AGE	_____
_____	PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	_____
_____	MENTAL ABILITIES	_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
_____	RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES	_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
_____		_____

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 2

TO THE TEACHER:

The elderly are stereotyped by the various media. Since the media have become an integral part of our daily lives, it is important that students realize that elderly individuals are not always accurately portrayed. In this learning experience, have students find an example of an elderly person in a stereotypic role. The student may use any of the following sources to find their example: newspaper, television, book, magazine or radio. When the assignment is due, have students share their findings with other members.

ACTIVITY 2

1. Where did you find your example? (Newspaper, T.V., Book, Magazine, etc.)

_____

_____.

2. How did the example you evaluated view the elderly?

_____

_____

_____.

3. Was this a true description of the elderly population? Why or why not?

_____

_____

_____.

4. How could this example affect society's attitude toward the elderly?

_____

_____

_____.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 3

TO THE TEACHER:

Before covering the topic on facts and fallacies of aging, give the quiz on the elderly. Have students number on their papers one through eight. Ask the eight questions listed on the following page. After they answer each question, give the correct answer and discuss.

QUIZ ON THE ELDERLY

Ask the following questions out loud to the students. After they have answered give the correct answer and discuss.

1. All elderly people are senile. (False)

2. Individuals who are elderly cannot learn because you "can't teach an old dog new tricks". (False)

3. All elderly people are hard of hearing and cannot see without glasses. (False)

4. Old people do not change their ways. (False)

5. Elderly people can be useful members of our society. (True)

6. Most of our elderly population are not housed in nursing homes or some other type of institution. (True)

7. Each elderly individual has his/her own unique personality. (True)

8. The elderly presently make up only 1% of our total population. (False)

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 5

TO THE TEACHER:

Have each student interview one elderly individual in their community. Hand out human development activity sheet 5. The students may need two days to complete this assighment. When the interview is due, allow students to divide in groups of two's and discuss their findings. Allow the students to change groups two more times for discussing their interviews.

ACTIVITY 4

MINUTE DRAMA

Scene: The FHA is having a meeting to discuss a possible project for serving the community.

Characters: President, Susie and Jan

****

President: Are there any suggestions for a community project?

Susie: (a member raises her hand) Why don't we adopt a grandparent from the local nursing home? There are so many residents there that have no family or friends in town.

Jan: EEK!!!! not me I don't like old people. They are so grumpy and can't hear anything. Most of the time you can't even understand what they're saying.

Susie: Thats not true. I know plenty of older people who are very warm and kind. You can't stereotype all old people like that.

****

DISCUSSION

What are stereotypes? What are examples of stereotypes?

Why do you think Jan views the elderly in unfavorable terms?

Have you known elderly people like the ones described by Jan? By Susie?

What can you gain from knowing an elderly person?

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 5

TO THE TEACHER:

Have each student interview one elderly individual in their community. Hand out human development activity sheet 5. The students may need two days to complete this assighment. When the interview is due, allow students to divide in groups of two's and discuss their findings. Allow the students to change groups two more times for discussing their interviews.

ACTIVITY 5

INTERVIEW

Assignment: Find one elderly person in your community that you would like to interview. The following questions may be used during the interview, but feel free to ask any question that you are interested in asking.

1. What is your age?_____

2. How do you feel about the youth of today?_____

_____

_____.

3. How does it feel to be an elderly citizen?_____

_____

_____.

4. How do you feel about being called elderly?_____

_____.

senior citizen?_____.

old man or old woman?_____.

What do you like to be called?_____.

5. What was the happiest age of your life? Why?_____

_____.

6. Is there anything that makes you unhappy about being your age?_____

_____.

7. Make up one question to ask:_____

_____

_____.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 6

TO THE TEACHER:

Make a transparency from "Demographic Facts About the Elderly". This can be done by using the thermofax machine or by copying on a blank transparency film. Show the transparency and read the lecture sheet entitled Demographic Facts about the Elderly. This could also serve as an introduction to a unit on the elderly.

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTS ABOUT THE ELDERLY

Demography is the study of populations. It provides us with information on birth rates, death rates and many other valuable statistics.

Ten percent of the American population, or more than 20 million people, are 65 years of age or older. The elderly are now the fastest growing group in the United States. In 1900 only three million or 4% of the population were 65 years and older. Why are people living longer? Increased life expectancy followed by medical advances in prevention and treatment of diseases. Improved health and sanitation is also a factor in increased life expectancy. New drugs and medical techniques now allow many older Americans to survive once fatal illnesses.

An individual at the turn of the century could expect to live 47 years. Presently, life expectancy has reached 70.4 years. Females have a higher life expectancy than their male equals. A male born today can expect to live 66.8 years and a female can expect to live 74.3 years. Half of our older population are 73 years of age. Do these statistics surprise you?

Source: Butler, Robert N. M.D. Why Survive? Being Old in America. Harper & Row Publishers: New York, 1975.

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTS ABOUT THE ELDERLY

1900	4%
1930	5.4%
1940	6.8%
1950	8.1%
1960	9.2%
1970	9.6%
2000	11.1%

(SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS)

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 7

TO THE TEACHER:

Have students find the terms that are related to the aging process. This activity may be given to students who finish their work ahead of time. It may also be used as an introduction to a unit on aging. When the students have finished finding the words, go over each and define what the word means.

ACTIVITY 7

PUZZLE

L I G F G E D E M O G R A P H Y R S O

N F R I R E T L D A B C E L D O F T L

U S A L O F O D Q U S W E L I N E S D

R I N M N J L E T A T A T P E L E R E

B N D T I D P R T R I I A M A A B E R

I G P E Y L E L M A T G T N R E L T L

R H A Y K L Y Y G U E S I T H O E W A

T P R R I M A T U R I T Y A A N W A O

H A E R C I R N O N A M E P C O Y C B

O H N G E R E N R E T I R E M E N T O

D M T O L W T R T F R I D U D E S O D

E E S M G P E A G O M G P R P C E S S

L O H I L I E T A L O M M E N U N R S

K P M O E S H W T D E F A I L Y S G N

N E G O I N N U R S I N G H O M E S N

I Y N W R E L A T I O N S H I P S J L

R S E P Y T O E R E T S D E A F N A E

W T P N O W R O V O T L E N R N O L Z

The following terms are related to the aging process. Find and circle as many of the twenty-one words as you can in the alloted time.

Aging process
Attitude
Birth
Deaf
Demography
Elderly
Family
Feeble
Gerontology
Grandparents
Life
Maturity
Nursing Homes
Old
Relationships
Retirement
Senile
Senses
Stereotype
Wise
Wrinkled

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 8

TO THE TEACHER:

Give out activity sheet eight. Have students fill out incomplete sentences. Ten minutes should be long enough to complete the activity. Have students form a circle and discuss answers.

ACTIVITY 8

TAKE A TRIP INTO THE FUTURE

When I am an elderly person I will look like_____

_____

_____

_____and I will act like_____

_____

_____I will expect others to treat me_____

_____

_____

I will be useful by_____

_____

_____

_____.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 9

TO THE TEACHER:

Construct a bulletin board in your classroom on "Facts and Fallacies" about the elderly (see the following page). Place folded cards so that students may lift up and see a statement. The statement should be either a fact or fallacy concerning the elderly. Each lift-up question is worth 1 point. They may rate themselves using the scale provided. If possible change the statements every one or two days. Some sample statements are:

1. Elderly individuals are senile. (Fallacy-not all elderly individuals are senile. Senility is not a normal process of aging)
2. Cataracts are considered common among elderly people. (Fact)
3. Older people contribute very little to our society. (Fallacy- many older Americans contribute to our society in a variety of ways)
4. As a person ages, his intelligence level decreases. (Fallacy- a person's intelligence does not decrease with age)
5. Sensory loss occurs as a person ages. (Fact- it is a life long process)
6. By the year 2000, the elderly will make up 5% of our population. (False-11% is the correct answer.)

FACTS AND FALLACIES ABOUT

THE ELDERLY

FACT OR FALLACY
1 POINT

90

FACT OR FALLACY
1 POINT

HOW DO YOU RATE?

0--------1--------2---------3---------4

(TRY AGAIN) (AVERAGE) (PERFECT)

FACT OR FALLACY
1 POINT

95

FACT OR FALLACY
1 POINT

96

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 10

TO THE TEACHER:

Have students read the excerpt from Alice's Adventure in Wonderland. After reading, have students answer the questions included on the activity sheet. This activity is recommended for the more capable student. Have those who complete the assignment discuss their answers. This would be a good activity to use as extra credit. The poem could be read to the rest of the class and the questions and answers read aloud.

ACTIVITY 10

And now, if e'er chance I put
    My fingers into glue
Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot
    Into a left-hand shoe,
Or if I drop upon my toe
    A very heavy weight,
I weep, for it reminds me so
Of that old man I used to know--
Whose look was mild, whose speech was slow
Whose hair was whiter than the snow,
Whose face was very like a crow,
With eyes, like cinders all aglow
Who seemed distracted with his woe,
Who rocked his body to and fro,
And muttered mumbling and low,
As if his mouth were full of dough,
Who snorted like a buffalo--
That summer evening long ago,
    A sitting on a gate

Lewis Carroll
from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

How does the author stereotype an elderly person?_____

_____

_____.

Is this a typical description of the elderly? Why or why not?_____

_____

_____.

What are the author's attitudes toward the elderly?_____

_____.

How would you describe an elderly person?_____

_____

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 11

TO THE TEACHER:

Make a transparency of the following page. Ask the students to interpret the meaning of the phrase "Attitudes can Entangle or Allow Growth". This may be a good time to discuss the students' attitudes toward the elderly.

ATTITUDES CAN ENTANGLE OR ALLOW GROWTH

100

101

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 12

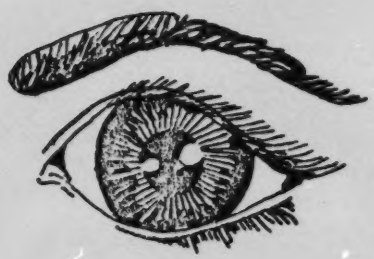
TO THE TEACHER:

Make a transparency of the following page. This transparency will help explain various types of sensory losses the elderly may experience. While explaining each sensory loss, allow the students to comment on how they think this sensory loss would affect an individual's behavior.

SENSORY LOSS ELDERLY

INDIVIDUALS MAY EXPERIENCE

HEARING DIFFICULTIES IN ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS ARE MORE COMMON THAN VISUAL OR TASTE IMPAIRMENTS. THIRTEEN PERCENT OF INDIVIDUALS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 65 AND 74 HAVE HEARING LOSS.



VISION DIFFICULTIES ARE A PROBLEM FOR THE ELDERLY. INDIVIDUALS 65 YEARS OR OLDER ARE CREDITED WITH HALF OF ALL THE KNOWN CASES OF LEGAL BLINDNESS. OTHER VISION IMPAIRMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH AGING INCLUDE: FARSIGHTEDNESS, SENSITIVITY TO LIGHT AND GLARE, DECREASED VISUAL ACUITY AND CATARACTS.

THE TASTE BUDS HAVE A TENDENCY TO DECLINE WITH AGE. AS MUCH AS 50% OF A PERSON'S TASTE BUDS MAY BE FUNCTIONING IN A 60 YEAR OLD PERSON.

THE ABILITY TO FEEL OBJECTS AND DISTINGUISH THEM IS KNOWN AS TACTILE SENSATIONS. ELDERLY INDIVIDUALS HAVE A DECREASE IN TOUCH SENSATIONS WHICH MAY CONTRIBUTE TO PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS. TYING A SHOE OR BUTTONING A SHIRT MAY BECOME DIFFICULT AND FRUSTRATING FOR THE ELDERLY.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE 13

TO THE TEACHER:

As an added activity, a cassette tape exercise in sensory loss has been distributed to each regional home economics supervisor. You may borrow this tape by contacting your regional supervisor. This activity deals with how it would feel to have a hearing difficulty. The following page contains the worksheet that is to be used with the tape. An answer key is also provided. In order to become familiar with the procedure of the exercise, listen to the tape and take the test yourself.

ACTIVITY 13

COLUMN A	COLUMN B
1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____
6. _____	6. _____
7. _____	7. _____
8. _____	8. _____
9. _____	9. _____
10. _____	10. _____

ANSWERS (Both A and B)

1. Fill
2. Catch
3. Thumb
4. Heap
5. Wise
6. Wedge
7. Fish
8. Shows
9. Bed
10. Juice

1. I don't want to go to the movie tonight.
2. Put that cookie back in the box.
3. How do you spell your name?
4. This suit needs to go to the cleaners.
5. Where have you been all this time?

Housing

UNIT II: Conceptual Structure

II. Housing and Home Furnishings

A. Alternative Living Choices

1. Independent Retirement
2. Group Living
3. Retirement Homes
4. Living with Children

B. Furnishings

1. Kitchen
2. Living Room
3. Bathroom

C. Sight - Lighting

D. Sound

E. Smell

F. Touch

G. Climate

H. Mobility

I. Safety

1. Throw Rugs
2. Floor Coverings

J. Housekeeping - Physical Limitations

1. Sensory Losses
2. Stiff Joints
3. Loss of Muscle Power
4. Lack of Energy

UNIT II: Generalizations

1. Elderly individuals can make adaptations that can facilitate ease of functioning in their own homes.

2. Serious accidents which alter the lives of the elderly can be prevented through changes/precautions in their environment.

3. The advantages and disadvantages of housing alternatives vary from one person to another, according to the individual's needs.

UNIT II: Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. suggest environmental adjustments to be made for ease of functioning by the elderly in their own homes;

2. describe arrangement/modification of furnishings to facilitate successful functioning by the elderly in their own homes;

3. discuss sensory - related alterations to facilitate ease in functioning by the elderly in their own homes;

4. develop environmental safety procedures for the elderly in the format of a checklist to use in the elderly person's home;

5. explain the physical limitations that commonly affect the aged and their implications in relation to housing.

UNIT II: Competencies

The student will be able to:

1. assess needs in environmental adjustments to facilitate ease of functioning by the elderly in their own homes;

2. implement arrangement/modification of furnishings to facilitate successful functioning by the elderly in their own homes;

3. provide a more comfortable environment for the elderly by making sensory-related changes in their homes;

4. implement safety procedures appropriate for the home of an elderly person.

UNIT II: Resources

Agan, T., Casto, M.D., Day, S. S., & Schwab, L. O. Adjusting the Environment for the Elderly and the Handicapped. Journal of Home Economics, May 1977, 18-20.

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Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Module VII: Meeting Home Management Needs. Occupational Living Services for Aging, Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office Washington, D.C., 1977.

Dickman, I.R. and Dickman, M. Where Older People Live: Living Arrangements for the Elderly. Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 556, Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 1978.

I'NIT II

LEARNING EXPFRIENCES

HOUSING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 1

TO THE TEACHER:

Show the following film:

Housing Options for the Elderly
Gerontological Film Collection
North Texas State University
Denton, Texas 76203
Telephone: 817/788-2691

Rental Film# Mp917

Have the students answer the following questions about the film:

1. What percentage of elderly individuals own their own home?

2. Name the types of housing options discussed in the film. Give the pros and cons of each option.

3. What points should be considered by an elderly couple and/or individual when deciding on a place to live?

HOUSING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 2

TO THE TEACHER:

Recently, renting an apartment in a complex designed especially for older people has been increasing in popularity as an independent living choice for elderly people. For this reason, the skit on the following pages was designed to familiarize students with this alternative living choice. Many of us are not aware of the services commonly offered in many of the apartment complexes for older people. At some point in their lives, the student will need to know these alternative living arrangements and need to make a decision as to which one will fit their own needs or the needs of their older relatives and/or friends.

After the students complete the skit, have the class discuss the following questions:

1) What were some advantages of living in an elderly highrise apartment building which were pointed out by Mrs. Green?

2) What are other advantages you can think of which were not mentioned by Mrs. Green?

3) Do you think living in an elderly highrise apartment building would be a good choice for Mrs. Wagoner?

4) Why or why not?

SKIT FOR HOUSING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 2

Helen Wagoner is a widow in her late sixties. She has adjusted well to her husband's death, but she feels she no longer needs to keep their big house. In the following skit, the manager, Mrs. Green, explains some of the advantages of living in an elderly highrise apartment building such as this one:

* *

Mrs. Green: Hello, Mrs. Wagoner, I am the manager for these apartments. What can I do for you?

Mrs. Wagoner: Well, I'd like to talk to you about renting an apartment, but I really haven't made up my mind yet as to what I'm going to do.

Mrs. Green: Well, Mrs. Wagoner, you'll love living here. The residents are very sociable, you'll meet a lot of nice people with whom you can be friends. Many of the neighbors go shopping, have dinner, visit friends who are not feeling well and just talk with each other. The most convenient part is living right across the hall or next door to each other.

Mrs. Wagoner: That sounds very nice, but when would I have the opportunity to meet anyone?

Mrs. Green: Oh, you will have many opportunities to meet others. We have a variety of planned activities and each day at noon, a hot nutritious meal is served in the dining room. Tenants as well as outsiders join us for "congregate dining" and a lot of socialization takes place.

Mrs. Wagoner: Those meals really sound nice, but sometimes I enjoy preparing my own meals. Can I prepare some of the meals and eat some of them downstairs in the dining room?

Mrs. Green: You sure can, and the same thing goes for the activities: sewing, ceramics, cards, etc. If you want to participate, you come only when you want.

Mrs. Wagoner: What other services are available?

Mrs. Green: We have transportation available to various places downtown and the city bus passes right in front of the apartment building to take you almost anywhere. Every Wednesday, we have a doctor come in for the

residents who feel they need to see the doctor. Also, a major concern with many people is that of security. We have a security guard on duty around the clock.

Mrs. Wagoner: This all sounds very nice, but I guess the one thing that bothers me the most is the cost of the place to live and all these services must be very expensive!

Mrs. Green: Fortunately, our building has been federally subsidized. For those who qualify with low incomes, the rent is determined according to the tenant's ability to pay. You need to get in touch with someone at the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Mrs. Wagoner: This sounds like exactly what I need and have been looking for. I am going home to call HUD about this right now.

HOUSING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 3

TO THE TEACHER:

While conducting a class discussion on the different types of living arrangements available to elderly people, give each student the handout "Types of Living Arrangements" on the following pages. Explain to the class how an individual's needs can differ and an advantage to one person may be a disadvantage to another. For example, maintaining a yard would be a disadvantage to an elderly person who was physically unable to do the work, while it would be considered an advantage to a person who got a lot of enjoyment from working in the yard.

HANDOUT FOR HOUSING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 3

TYPES OF LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

LIVING ARRANGEMENT	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
I. Independent Living		
1. Keep present home	*Usually paid for	*May be unable to do maintenance and upkeep
	*May be more comfortable in own home	*May be too large to keep clean
	*Established neighbors	*May not be convenient to doctor, shopping, etc.
2. Rent an Apartment	*No maintenance and upkeep	*May not have yard for gardening, if one enjoys doing it
	*Some provide services such as laundry, meals, security checks, activities, etc.	
	*Some apartments are built especially with elderly people in mind	
3. Buy or build retirement house	*Can build according to needs (size, adaptations)	*Maintenance and upkeep needed
	*Can build in convenient location	*Could be expensive

(continued)

TYPES OF LIVING ARRANGEMENTS		
4. Residential hotel	*Free of responsibilities *Free to come and go as one pleases	*Loneliness
5. Retirement community	*Meals may be provided *Planned Activities are usually available *Neighbors are same age	*Little exposure to people who are younger
II. Progressive Living		
1. Retirement homes	*Meals are provided *Personal care available as needed *Recreational activities available	*Small living area *May not feel as if it is "home"
III. Dependent Living		
1. Living with children	*Will be in a family setting *Fewer financial concerns	*Must give up certain amount of independence *May cause family conflicts *May become more dependent, affecting self concept

HOUSING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 4

TO THE TEACHER:

Discuss the following questions with your class:

Age Segregation/Integration

1. What is age segregation?
2. What is age integration?
3. What are some reasons older people would not want to live in the same complex with younger people?
4. What are some reasons younger people would not want to live in the same complex with older people?
5. What are some reasons older people would want to live in the same complex with younger people?
6. What are some reasons younger people would want to live in the same complex with older people?

TO THE TEACHER:

Ask a building contractor who specializes in building apartments or houses for the elderly to visit the class and give a presentation. In the presentation, ask that adaptations be mentioned which can be made in the building stage to accomodate an elderly person. Included in these adaptations would be changes such as:

1) Built-in handrails in and around the bathtub/shower
2) A small seat installed to pull down and sit on while bathing
3) Doors which are at least 32" wide
4) Natural light in living area whenever possible
5) Carpet which has a short nap or fiber
6) Flooring which is not slick and/or shiny
7) Light fixtures installed which can be pulled down for ease in changing bulbs
8) Electrical outlets installed which are at waist level
9) Storage shelves which are convenient to use in the kitchen, etc.

TO THE TEACHER:

Invite a safety inspector to come to talk with the class on "Safety of the Elderly." When preparing the talk, ask the inspector to discuss these points:

1) What is the most common cause of fires in homes of the elderly?

2) Discuss safety hazards which are commonly found in homes of the elderly.

3) What are some things that high school home economics students can do to help the elderly prevent accidents?

4) What, if anything, is being done by your office to minimize home accidents among the elderly?

TO THE TEACHER:

Have each student develop a checklist which they can use to make inexpensive adaptations to insure more comfortable and safer housing for the elderly. Discuss adaptations in class, devising a master checklist on the chalk board or a handout which includes questions such as:

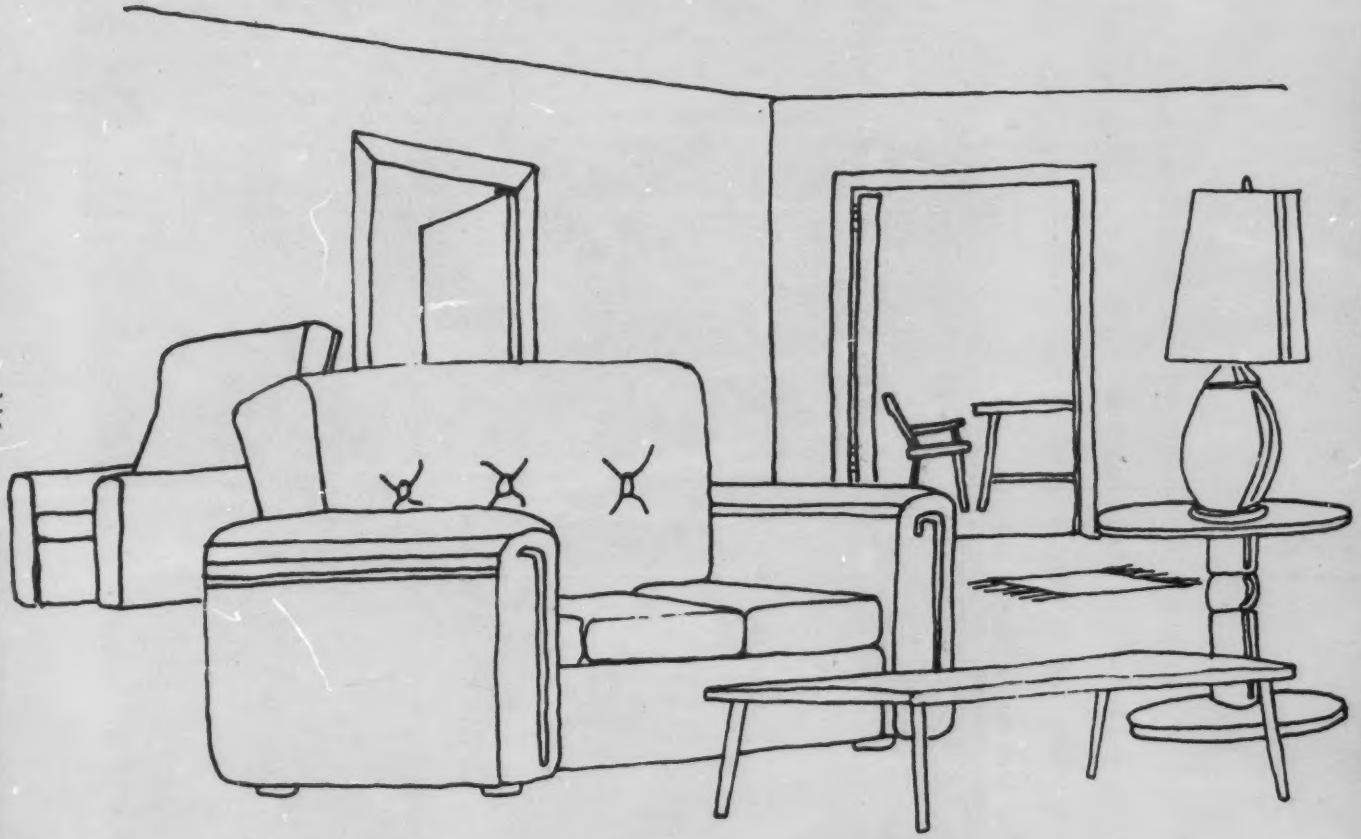
	YES	NO
Is lighting adequate, especially in work and reading areas?	_____	_____
Are sounds such as telephones, alarms and door bells easily heard by an elderly person?	_____	_____
Has hot water temperature been reduced to 110° F. to decrease the chances of scalding?	_____	_____
Have throw rugs been eliminated or sprayed with non-skid spray?	_____	_____
Are all electrical cords in good repair?	_____	_____
Are electrical outlets easily reached without having to bend or stoop?	_____	_____
Do windows, doors and drawers slide or open easily?	_____	_____
Are traffic patterns simple and direct?	_____	_____
Are long fireproof oven mitts available to be used in the kitchen?	_____	_____
Has bathtub been made skid-proof by adding adhesives or non-slip rubber mats?	_____	_____
Is kitchen storage arranged with items used most often at eye level?	_____	_____

HOUSING, LEARNING EXPERIENCE 8

TO THE TEACHER:

Use the illustration on the next page to make a transparency and show it to the class on an overhead projector. Discuss with the class suggestions in adapting the living area to be more comfortable, safe and convenient for the two elderly people. Be sure to point out these things:

1) Lamp could be placed by chair to provide stronger reading light.
2) Throw rug could be eliminated.
3) More space needed between coffee table and sofa.
4) Furniture could be arranged for better traffic flow.



HANDOUT FOR HOUSING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 9

ASSIGNMENT: Find an elderly man in your community that you would like to interview. (This person could be a neighbor, relative, friend or new acquaintance.) Ask the questions on the following pages concerning housing adaptations. Tell the person you are interviewing that he may choose from the answers given, add new answers to the list or give the answer "none." He may also have more than one answer. You may want to mention to the class that they must not feel bad if their interviewee has not made any additions or changes. The questionnaire may give him ideas of things he could do to make his home more comfortable or safer.

HOUSING ADAPTATIONS INTERVIEW

1. In the past several years, what things have you added or changed in your home, apartment, etc. to make it more comfortable or safer?

_____Added more light fixtures

_____Changed to stronger wattage bulbs in existing lighting

_____Installed additional telephone jack

_____Installed smoke alarm

_____Increased thermostat setting during winter

_____Reduced hot water temperature?

_____Eliminated throw rugs or sprayed with non-slick backing

_____Lubricated windows, doors, drawers

_____Added rubber mats and/or handbars in bathroom tub

_____Other:

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What things would you like to add or change in your home, apartment, etc. if you were able, to make it more comfortable or safer?

_____Add more light fixtures

_____Change to stronger wattage bulbs in existing lighting

_____Install additional telephone jack

_____Install smoke alarm

(continued on next page) 118

_____Increase thermostat setting during winter

_____Reduce hot water temperature

_____Eliminate throw rugs or spray with non-slick backing

_____Lubricate windows, doors, drawers

_____Add rubber mats and/or handbars in bathroom tub

_____Other:

_____

_____

_____

_____

Food and Nutrition

UNIT III: Conceptual Structure

III. Nutrition

A. Significance

B. Diet and Disease

1. Low Salt
2. Heart and Blood Vessel Disease
3. High Blood Pressure
4. Diabetes

C. Effects of Aging Factors

1. Vision
2. Taste and Smell
3. Digestion
4. Teeth
5. Strength and Energy
6. Loneliness
7. Income
8. Illness

D. Meal Planning Considerations

1. Special Diets
2. Basic Four Food Groups
3. Caloric Reduction
4. Other
   a. Who plans, Shops and Prepares
   b. Equipment and Storage Available
   c. Food Habits and Preferences

d. Educational Level

e. Meal Programs Available

f. Budget

UNIT III: Generalizations

1. Many elderly individuals are on special diets which must be considered in meal planning for the elderly.

2. Certain factors which decrease one's appetite create diet problems as one grows older.

3. Attention must be given to the basic four food groups, caloric intake, and various social-psychological factors when planning meals for the elderly person.

UNIT III: Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. list diet associated diseases common to the elderly and their effects on meal planning;

2. describe the effects of age-related factors in the preparation and consumption of foods;

3. plan and evaluate meals for the elderly according to the basic four food groups and caloric intake, as well as other considerations.

UNIT III: Competencies

The student will be able to:

plan meals for the elderly, taking into consideration diseases, effects of aging factors, the basic food groups, and caloric intake as well as various other factors.

UNIT III: Resources

Department of Education, Division of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education, Home Economics Education Section, State of Florida. Unit III: Housekeeping Technology. Institutional and Home Management and Supportive Services: A Resource Guide, Tallahassee, Florida 32306.

Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Module VI: Nutrition and Food Handling for the Aging Services. Occupational Home Economics Education Series: Care and Independent Living Services for Aging, Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1977.

Exton-Smith. A.N. Physiological Aspects of Aging: Relationships to Nutrition. American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 1972, 25, 853-859.

Pestle, R. E. & Wilcox, C. F. Adaptations of Homemaking Skills for the Aged: Nutritional Needs. Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education, 1978.

Tate, D Food for Later Years. Cooperative Extension Service, University of Georgia. (#PA-F-162)

UNIT III

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

FOOD AND NUTRITION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 1

TO THE TEACHER:

Elderly individuals prefer meals that are relatively easy to prepare. For this activity, have students plan a daily menu for an elderly individual. Direct students to plan menus that are nutritious and appetizing. A suggested activity sheet may be found on the following page.

After students have planned their meals, allow them to gather recipes and rewrite where necessary. This may take an additional class period. These recipes may be compiled in a booklet and displayed at your local grocery stores for elderly shoppers to take home.

ACTIVITY SHEET 1

Elderly individuals prefer meals that are relatively easy to prepare. Keeping this in mind, plan a daily menu for an elderly individual. Be sure to use the principles of a well balanced meal.

BREAKFAST:

LUNCH:

DINNER:

When you finish the three meals, begin compiling a list of recipes for each dish. Be sure to keep them simple!!!!

FOOD AND NUTRITION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 2

TO THE TEACHER:

Special diets are frequently prescribed for elderly individuals. Have students choose a special diet he/she would like to find out more about. Give Activity Sheet 2 to students. The students should answer the questions listed on the activity sheet by looking in books, interviewing the school nurse, the local school dietician, or other professionals associated with a health occupation. This assignment may take two days to complete. On the day the activity sheet is due, have students divide into groups of similar diets. Have each group report their findings to the rest of the class.

List of Special Diets

Salt Free

Bland Diet

Low Cholesterol/Low Fat

Low Calorie

ACTIVITY SHEET 2

Choose one medical condition which requires a special diet. Find out as much as you can about the diet by looking in books, interviewing the school nurse, the local school dietician, or other professionals associated with a health occupation. Report your findings to the class.

1. Medical condition and special diet you have chosen_____

_____.

2. Explain the medical condition (i.e. causes, deficiences)_____

_____

3. What restrictions are placed on the diet?_____

_____

_____.

4. How long will these restrictions be placed on the individual?

_____

_____.

5. Name some specific foods that are prohibited_____

_____

_____.

6. Name some specific foods that are needed or allowed on the special diet_____

_____.

7. Plan a breakfast, lunch and dinner menu for your special diet. (You may use the back of this sheet)

FOOD AND NUTRITION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 3

TO THE TEACHER:

Many elderly individuals do not eat well balanced meals because they tend to become disinterested in food. There are many ways to help elderly individuals enjoy meal time. Have students brainstorm ideas on how to help elderly individuals eat properly. To get started, you may mention the following;

1. Try to arrange meals so that the elderly will have company to talk with.
2. Eat regular meals. Avoid eating quickly.
3. Vary the places they eat. Take a picnic when possible.
4. Decorate the table attractively. Place fresh flowers or plants in the center of the table.

List students' ideas on the chalkboard. This may be a good time to discuss the eating patterns of elderly individuals that live in students' homes or live near them.

FOOD AND NUTRITION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 4

TO THE TEACHER:

Caloric needs change as a person grows older. On the following page, there is a chart that depicts these caloric changes as a person grows older. You may make a transparency from this page to display for students. While showing this transparency, bring up the following points:

1. Due to changes in metabolism and the fact that people are generally less active when they get older, calorie needs decrease.
2. A male aged 16-19 needs 3600 calories to maintain his weight.
3. A male aged 65 needs approximately 2600 calories to maintain his weight. This is a reduction of 1000 calories from the 16-19 age group.
4. A female aged 13-15 needs approximately 2600 calories to maintain her weight.
5. A female aged 65 needs approximately 1800 calories to maintain her weight. This is a reduction of 800 calories from the 13-15 age group.
6. A lot of times it is hard for elderly individuals to cut down on their consumption of food. This is why many are overweight.
7. There is also a problem with the elderly not getting the proper nutrients in their diets. Many elderly fail to get enough calcium, vitamin A and vitamin C.
8. Elderly individuals may also have problems with faulty digestion and poor appetites.

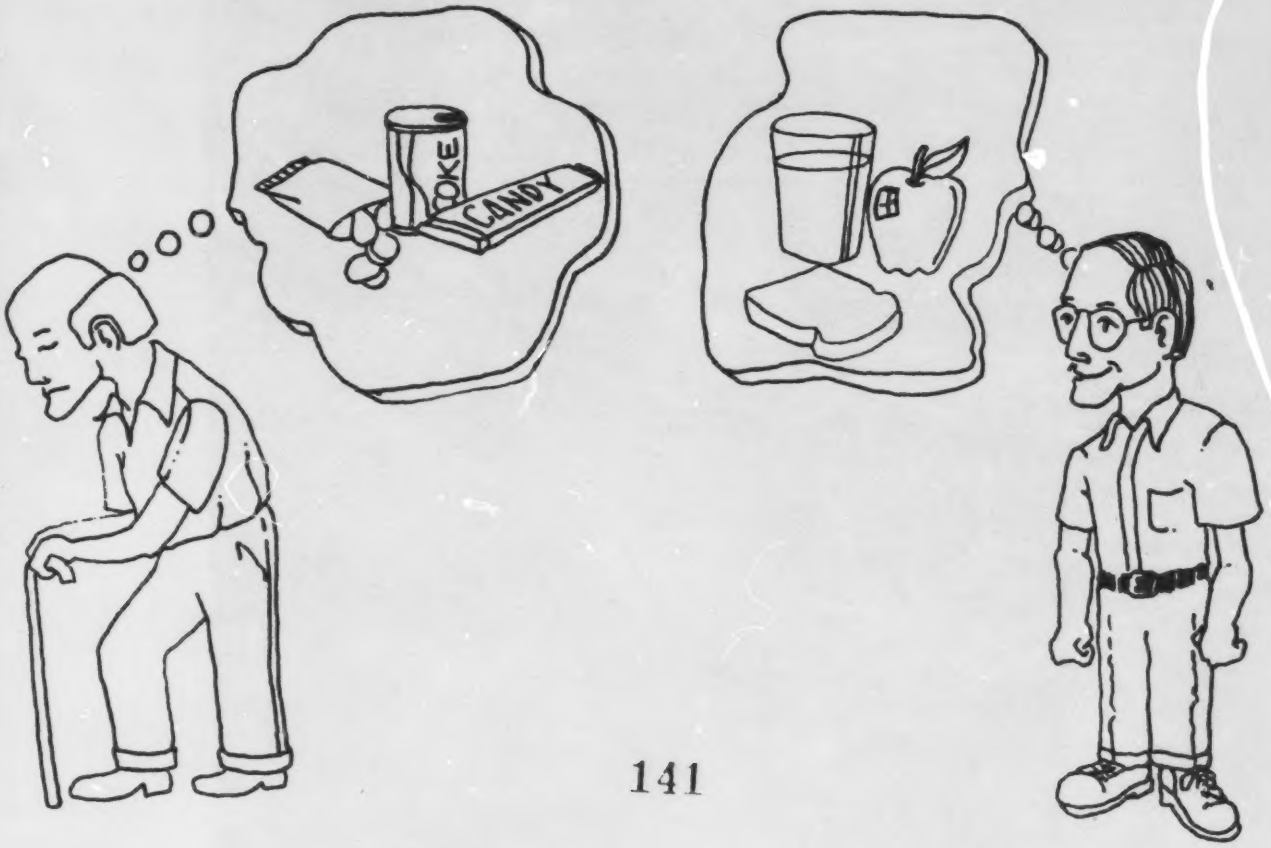
FOOD AND NUTRITION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 5

TO THE TEACHER:

Make a transparency of the drawing on the following page. Have the students respond by indicating what the title "Good Nutrition Now Means Good Health Later" implies. This would be a good time to bring up the importance of good nutrition during the teenage years.

GOOD NUTRITION NOW MEANS

GOOD HEALTH LATER



SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD AND NUTRITION LEARNING ACTIVITIES

TO THE TEACHER:

The following is a list of additional activities you may want to use in this unit.

***Invite the local director of Meals on Wheels to speak to your class. Ask them to discuss the nutritional needs of the elderly individual. Also ask them to discuss how they prepare meals for various individuals who are on special diets.

***Call your local Senior Center or Nursing home and set up a field trip to visit the kitchen. Have students observe the nutritional adequacy of meals, preparation, appearance and service of food. Also have them observe the elderly while eating both in the dining room and in the bedrooms (for those who are bedridden). Ask them to notice the food left uneaten and the effect the uneaten food would have on the well-planned diet.

***For a FHA/HERO project, volunteer to help out on a Meals on Wheels program by delivering meals, helping prepare food etc.. Another idea is to put on a program at a congregate meal site on nutrition education for the elderly.

Clothing and Textiles

UNIT IV: Conceptual Structure

IV. Clothing

A. Changes in Body Proportions

1. Abdomen and Hips

2. Legs

3. Waistline

4. Arms

5. Curvature of Posture

B. Problems in Finding Appropriate Clothing

1. Fit

2. Texture

C. Preferred Features

1. Design

a. Comfort

b. Ease of Dressing

c. Ease of Fabric Care

d. Becoming Style

e. Attractive Colors

2. Style

a. Shift-style

b. One-piece Dresses, Semi-fitted Waists

c. A-line Skirts

d. Lowered Necklines

e. Sleeves

1. Short Raglan

2. Straight without Cuffs

F. Fasteners

1. Zippers

2. Large Buttons

3. Long Center-front Closures

4. Nylon Hook and Loop Tape

3. Safety

a. Flammability

1. Synthetics

2. Weaves and Naps

b. Style

UNIT IV: Generalizations

1. Due to body proportion changes, the elderly often have a problem finding appropriate clothing that fits them well.

2. The elderly have certain features to consider when designing or choosing garments for themselves which can make their lives more comfortable.

3. There are several precautions an elderly person may take in selecting his/her clothing to lessen the chance of having clothing-related accident

UNIT IV: Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. describe changes in the proportions of an elderly person's body which must be considered when choosing or designing garments for them;

2. design a garment suitable to the preferences and needs of a given elderly person;

3. identify garments which may encourage clothing-related accidents and suggest alternatives or modifications.

UNIT IV: Competencies

The student will be able to:

1. assist the elderly in selecting garments which are appropriate to their preferences and needs;

2. design a garment suitable to the preferences and needs of an elderly person;

3. assist the elderly in selecting garments which do not encourage clothing-related accidents.

UNIT IV: Resources

Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Division of Health Care Services, U.S. Community Health Services. Working with Older People, A Guide to Practice, 1969, Vol. 1-4, Arlington, Virginia 22203.

Hoffman, A.M. The Daily Needs and Interest of Older People. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1970.

Phipps, C.A. Clothing Design for Handicapped Elderly Women Journal of Home Economics, 1977, 69, 4, 21-23.

Quinn, M.D. Design within Limits. Journal of Home Economics, 1978, 70, 4, 34-35.

UNIT IV

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

CLOTHING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 1

TO THE TEACHER:

All elderly people do not lose their waistlines, develop fuller arms, etc. For this reason, all elements of design should be considered when planning or choosing garments for an elderly individual, just as they are for any age group. However, there are general preferences (such as personal, practical, and safety) which also contribute to the selection of clothing for elderly people.

Conduct a class discussion about these factors, as they relate to types of fabrics, styles, etc. that elderly people wear. After a general discussion, divide the class into groups of four or five students. Provide each group with fabric samples you have collected which would be either appropriate or inappropriate for garments for the elderly. Include fabric samples such as organza, wool, cotton/polyester blend, corduroy, double knit, sailcloth and terry cloth. Also give each group the handout on the following page to complete. If the fabric samples you collected to give to the groups differ from the suggested samples, be sure to adjust the handout accordingly. After the groups have had enough time to complete the handout, discuss it as a class.

HANDOUT FOR CLOTHING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 1

DIRECTIONS: After examining each of the fabric samples given to your group, list the advantages and/or disadvantages of each sample. Consider factors previously discussed in class, such as personal preference, care, safety and comfort. Try to list as many advantages and/or disadvantages for each fabric sample as possible.

FABRIC SAMPLE	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
ORGANZA		
WOOL		
CORDUROY		
DOUBLE KNIT		
SAILCLOTH		
TERRY CLOTH		
COTTON/POLYESTER BLEND		

TO THE TEACHER:

There are various problems elderly people have which make dressing themselves more and more difficult as they grow older. Being able to dress themselves is an important skill for elderly people to remain independent. Discuss with the class the role of dressing and caring for oneself in remaining independent. Point out in the discussion how it would make any of us feel if we were unable to button our own shirt, tie our own necktie, or zip up our own dress.

To illustrate clothing adaptations which can make dressing easier for elderly people, the drawings on the following pages are provided. A transparency can be made of each page and shown to the students on an overhead projector.

Many of the drawings illustrate adaptations which the students could use to suggest to older people they know who might have problems in dressing themselves. Other adaptations are those which could actually be made by the students for older people, if the students showed the interest. These particular students may want to view the filmstrip "Adapting Ready to Wear for Special Needs" for more details of some of the illustrated adaptations.

Because hook and loop tape can be used for so many adaptations, you may want to bring in a strip of it to be sure the class is familiar with it. Hook and loop tape is also known as Velcro.

TRANSPARENCY A: For elderly people with arthritic fingers, buttons can be removed and sewn on top of buttonholes to simulate a buttoned shirt. Hook and loop tape can then be sewn on the tab and front facing of the shirt to eliminate the elderly person having to button the shirt.

TRANSPARENCY B: Use of elastic thread provides "built-in give," permitting the hand to slip through a pre-buttoned cuff.

TRANSPARENCY C: Limited movement in fingers makes tying a traditional necktie difficult. A pre-tied necktie which has been cut off at the shoulder seam and attached with hook and loop tape makes dressing easier. Clip-on ties also facilitate easy dressing for men.

TRANSPARENCY D: For those with arthritic fingers, both types of shoes make dressing much easier than the traditional lace-up shoes.

TRANSPARENCY E: Dresses can be bought with front closures or they

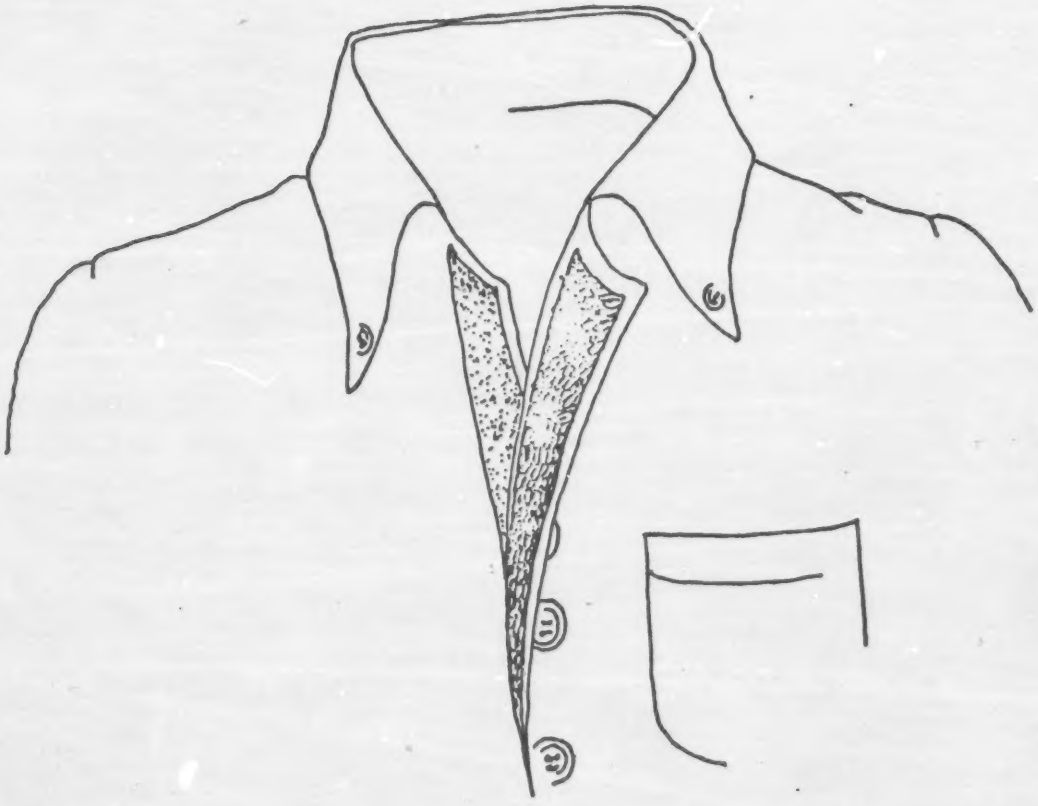
can be adapted by removing a back neckline zipper sewing up the center back seam, and inserting the zipper in the center front seam. An invisible zipper may also be used so the zipper will not be so obvious.

TRANSPARENCY F: For elderly people with confined mobility, additional room in a garment can be provided by inserting a gusset in the underarm seam.

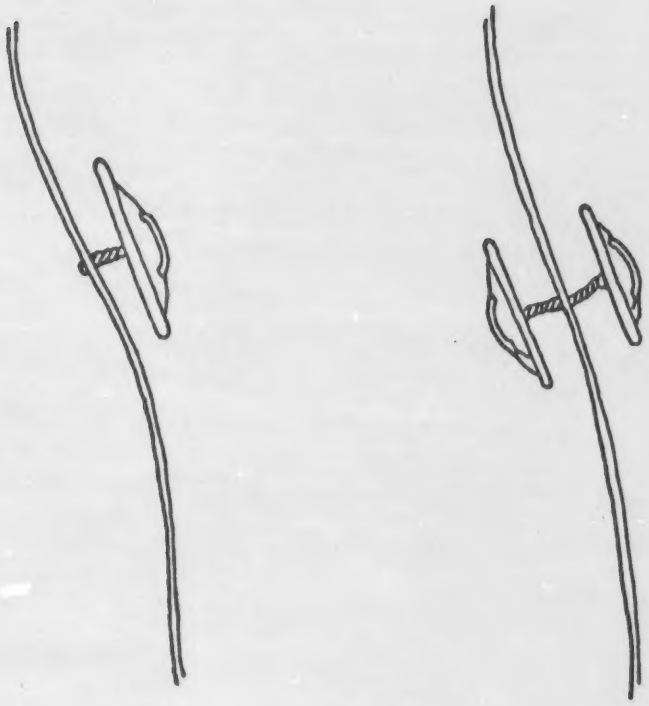
TRANSPARENCY G: For easier dressing, a three-quarter length front button closure can be extended to the hem.

TRANSPARENCY H: The amount of movement allowed by a regular set-in sleeve can be greatly increased by adding action pleats.

TRANSPARENCY A

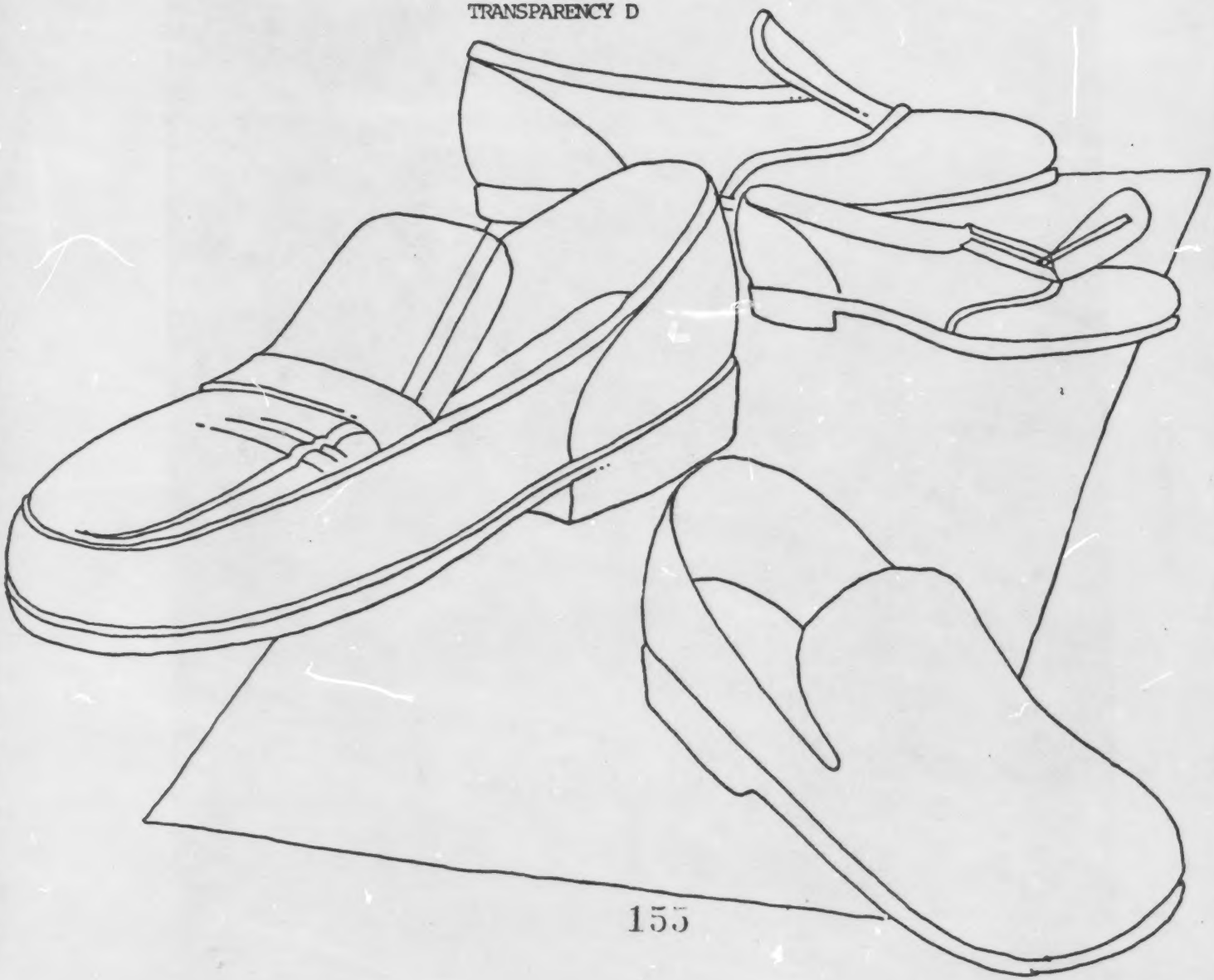


TRANSPARENCY B



TRANSPARENCY C

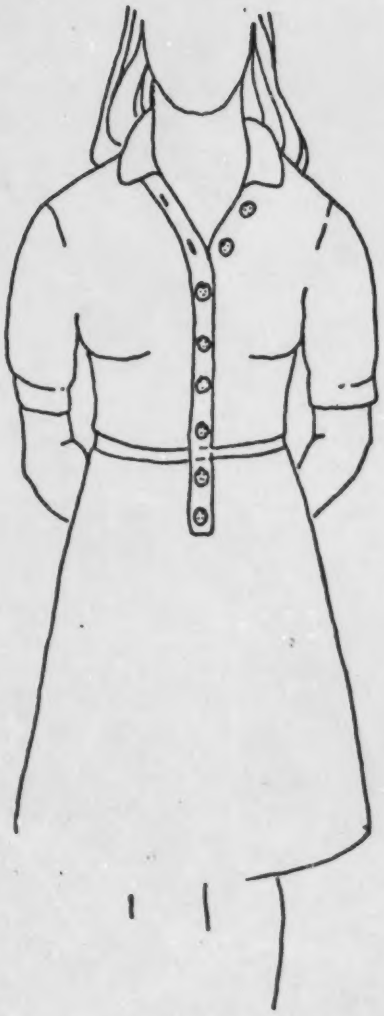
TRANSPARENCY D

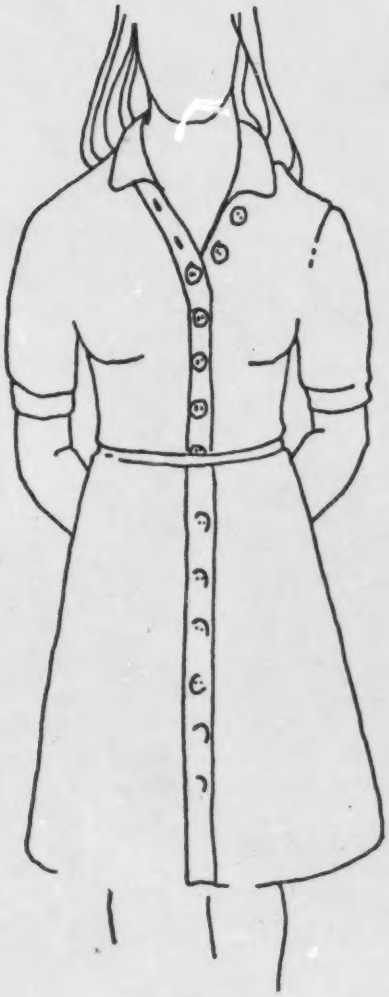


TRANSPARENCY E

TRANSPARENCY F

TRANSPARENCY G





TRANSPARENCY H

CLOTHING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 3

TO THE TEACHER:

Ask each member of the class to interview an elderly woman on clothing preferences. After the students complete the interview, have them compile the information which was obtained in the interview and discuss the compilations in class. As an optional project, each member of the class can follow up their interview by working with the elderly person to design and construct a garment according to the elderly woman's preferences and needs. Be sure to have the student write up the plans for the project and have them approved in advance by you and the elderly person.

HANDOUT FOR CLOTHING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 3

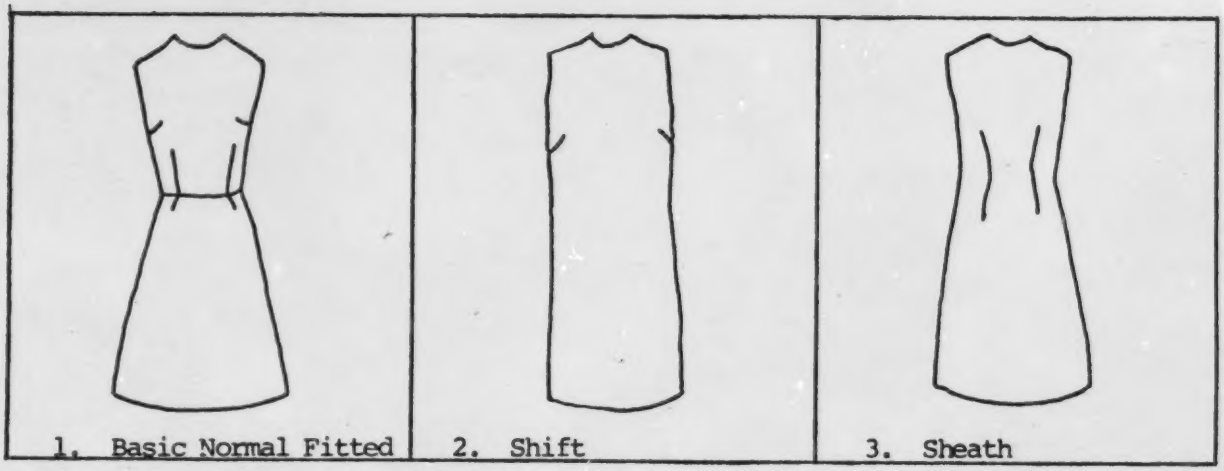
ASSIGNMENT: Find an elderly woman in your community that you would like to interview. (This person could be a neighbor, relative, friend or new acquaintance.) Ask the questions on the following pages concerning clothing preferences. Tell the person you are interviewing that she may have a first and second choice to the questions.

1. What is your age?_____

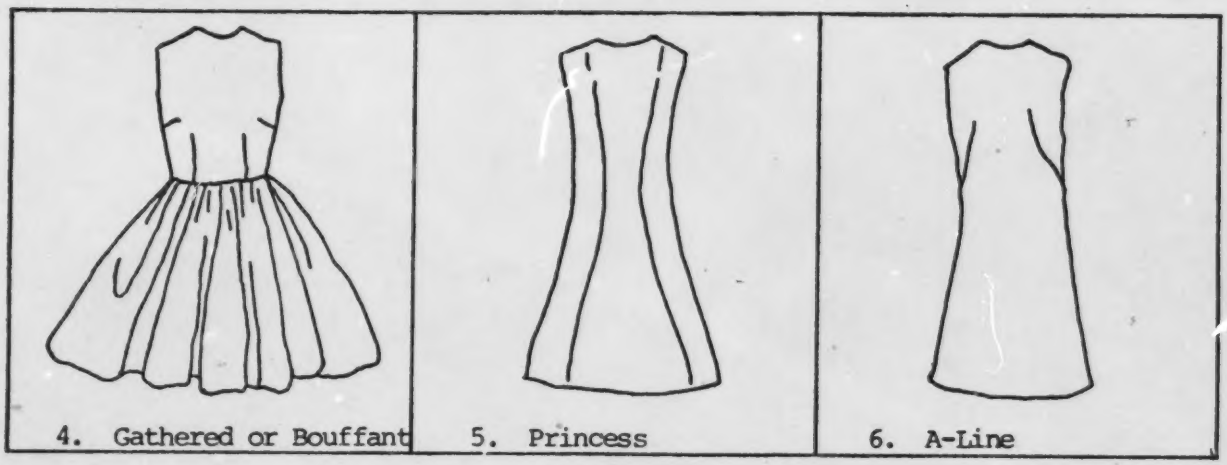
2. What style dresses do you prefer to wear? (Turn to next page)

   First Choice_____

   Second Choice_____



1. Basic Normal Fitted
2. Shift
3. Sheath



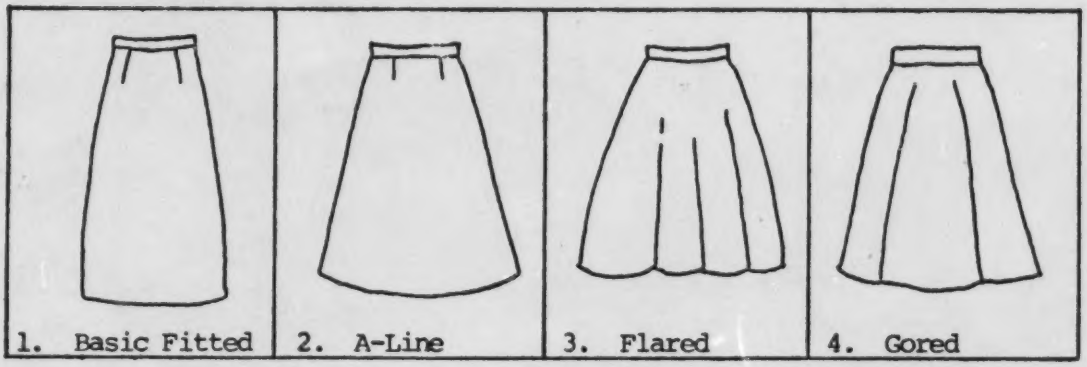
4. Gathered or Bouffant
5. Princess
6. A-Line

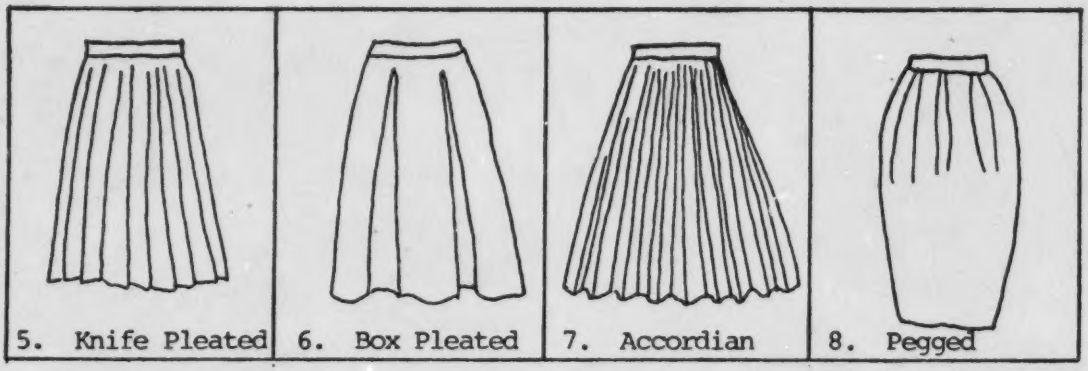
7. Jumper
8. Shirtwaist

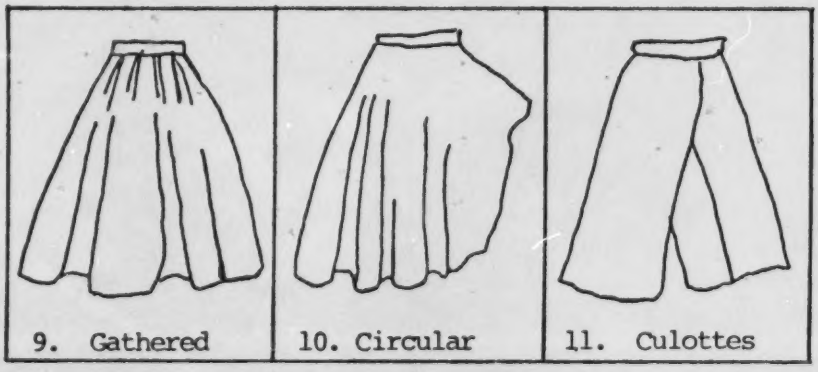
3. What style skirt do you prefer to wear?

_____First Choice _____Prefer a dress

_____Second Choice _____Prefer pants

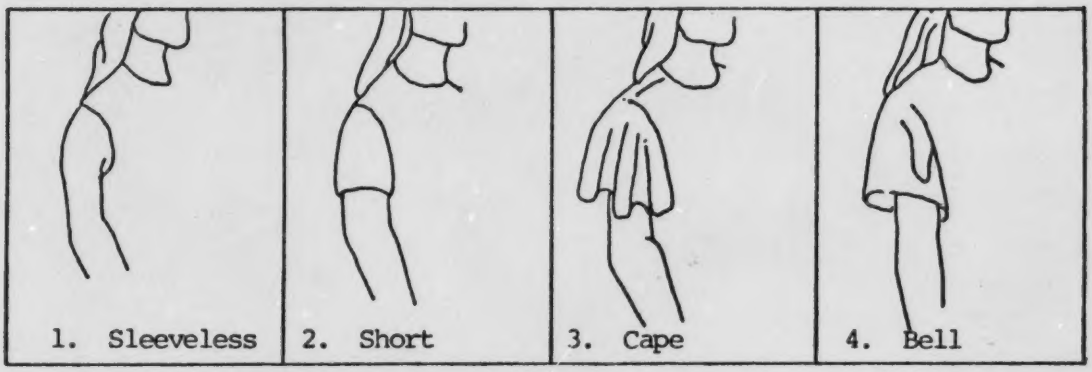


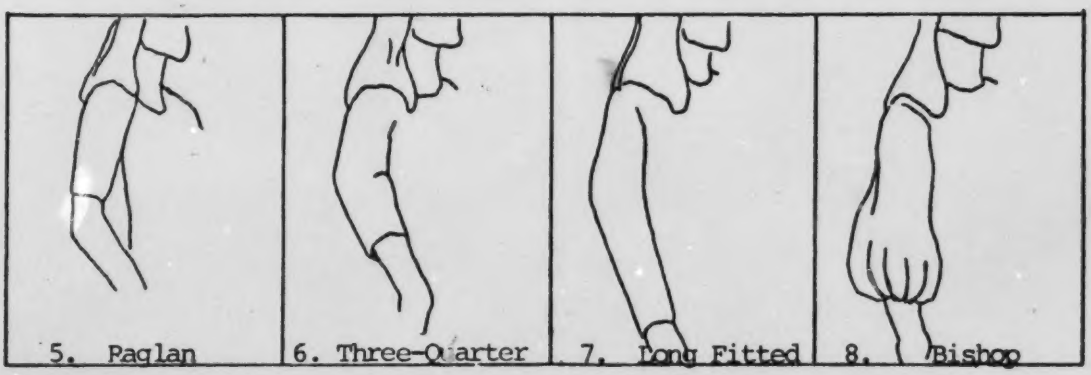


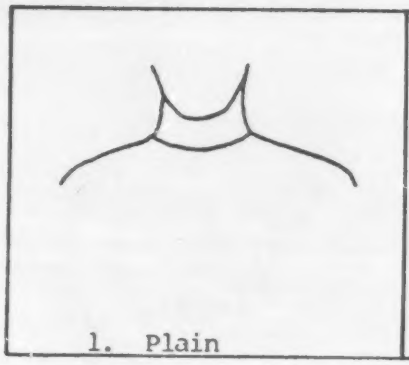


4. What style sleeve do you prefer to wear?

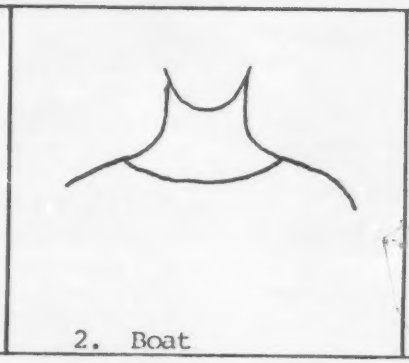
_____First Choice _____Second Choice



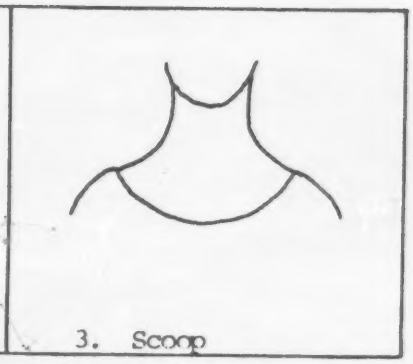




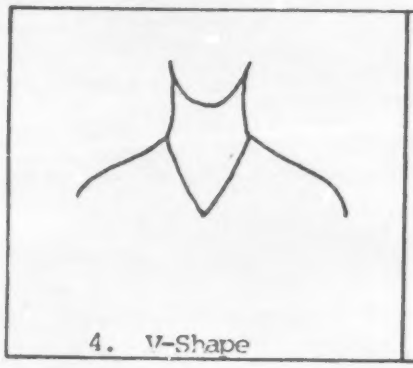
1. Plain



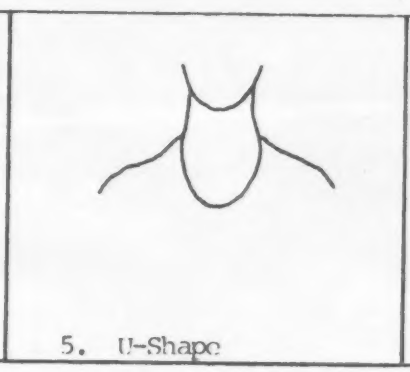
2. Boat



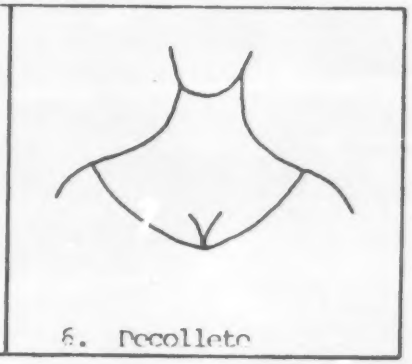
3. Scoop



4. V-Shape



5. U-Shape



6. Decollete

5. What type neckline do you prefer to wear?

_____First Choice

_____Second Choice

6. What do you look for when you choose a new garment?

_____First Choice

_____Second Choice

1. Easy to care for
2. Comfortable fabric
3. Comfortable fit
4. Cool for summer/warm for winter
5. Nice Style
6. Nice Color

CLOTHING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 4

TO THE TEACHER:

Have the students "draw from a hat", a card describing the needs and prefe-
ences of a certain elderly person and ask them to design an appropriate
garment for that person. Some suggested situations for the cards are:

1. Mr. Jackson lives in South Florida where the climate stays fairly warm all year long. He dresses very casually most of the time. Design a shirt and a pair of pants for Mr. Jackson that would be appropriate for this climate. The closures should be simple and easy to manipulate. Also include the type of fabric you would recommend for these two garments.

2. Mrs. Johnson is an individual who likes to travel a lot. Because of her traveling, her clothing needs to be adaptable to both warm and cold weather. She has difficulty manipulating small closures. Design a traveling ensemble for Mrs. Johnson.

3. Mrs. Bowman is a woman in her late seventies. Her body proportions have changed over the years. Her waistline has disappeared and her arms have become fuller. Design a garment keeping these two considerations in mind.

4. Mr. Williams is 64 years old and is still working at his job as office manager. He has trouble buttoning the tiny buttons on men's shirts. Ties are also hard to manipulate. Design or adapt a shirt and tie that Mr. Williams can put on with ease.

5. Mrs. Adams is an elderly individual who has had arthritis for a number of years. She is fairly active and likes the idea of being independent. Because of her arthritic condition, Mrs. Adams cannot manipulate the various closures that are on ready-to-wear clothing. Design a dress or blouse that would be appropriate for Mrs. Adams.

CLOTHING LEARNING EXPERIENCE 5

TO THE TEACHER:

Have the students bring in pictures such as those from magazine or catalog advertisements which portray older people. Discuss design and style features of the clothing worn by the elderly people in these pictures. Also have the class determine why they think a particular design, style, etc. was chosen.

Consumer Education

UNIT V: Conceptual Structure

V. Consumer Problems of the Aging

A. Reasons for Vulnerability

1. Loneliness

2. Lack of awareness regarding Legislation

3. Fear of Crime

4. Failing Health

5. Greater Need to Deal with Contracts

6. Reduced Income and Inflation

B. Fraudulent Acts and Misleading Claims

1. Health Claims

2. Extra Income Claims

3. Retirement Communities

4. Miscellaneous Dangers

a. Dancing Instruction

b. Referral Selling

c. Correspondence Schools

d. Insurance

UNIT V: Generalizations

1. There are various factors which contribute to the elderly's vulnerability which need to be understood before helping them deal with their consumer problems.

2. Many consumer protection agencies exist that will assist the elderly in minimizing consumer problems.

UNIT V: Competencies

The student will be able to:

1. diagnose a particular elderly person's reason(s) for being vulnerable.
2. assist the elderly in locating consumer protection agencies which deal with special consumer problems the elderly might have.

UNIT V: Resources

Cameron, M.J. Views of Aging: A Teachers' Guide. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Institute of Gerontology, 1976.

Federal Trade Commission. Protection for the Elderly, FTC Buyer's Guide No. 9. Washington, D. C. 20580.

U.S. Department of Labor. Know Your Pension Plan. Labor-Management Service Administration, Washington, D. C. 20216

UNIT V

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

CONSUMER EDUCATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 1

TO THE TEACHER:

Use the case study entitled "The Retirement of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson" to teach students how to use the decision making process. Have students read the case study together. Go through each step with your class and list responses on the chalkboard. Relate Mr. and Mrs. Wilson's problem to other elderly couples living on retirement incomes.

DECISION MAKING PROCESS

1. Identify Mr. and Mrs. Wilson's goals.
2. Identify their alternatives.
3. Gather the information that you have.
4. Evaluate their alternatives.
5. Make a choice for Mr. and Mrs. Wilson.

ACTIVITY 1

THE RETIREMENT OF MR. AND MRS. WILSON

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson have been married 40 years. They plan to retire next year and move from Maryland to Florida. This has been a lifelong dream for both Mr. and Mrs. Wilson. They presently own their home but will have to sell it in order to purchase a new home in Florida. The present value of the Wilsons' home is $30,000.00. A comparible home in Florida is considerably higher in price ($38,000). Their total savings is $10,000.00. After retirement Mr. Wilson's income will be cut from $20,000.00 to $8,000.00 a year. They are rethinking their move to Florida. Mrs. Wilson doesn't like the winters in Maryland and was looking forward to a warmer climate. Mr. Wilson also likes the weather in Florida. He is a swimmer and golfer. Using the decision making process, help Mr. and Mrs. Wilson with their dilemma.

TO THE TEACHER:

The elderly individual usually has a decrease in income after retirement. To help students visualize the reasons for this decrease, the "Source of Income" sheet was developed. Make an overhead transparency of the information and discuss the following questions:

1. Where do the elderly get most of their income?
2. What is social security?
3. What is the second largest source of income for the elderly?
4. At what age do you have to retire?
5. What types of income do you see the elderly depending on heavily that the under 25 and the 35-44 year old age groups depend on to a much lesser degree?
6. Inflation has been an especially important concern of the elderly. Why do you think they are affected so much more?
7. What types of income would be considered a hedge against inflation?

SOURCES OF INCOME

AGE OF FAMILY HEAD	Under 25	35-44	65
AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE	2.1	4.3	1.7
MONEY BEFORE TAXES	$6240.00	$12,264.00	$5019.00
SOURCES OF INCOME:			
WAGES	90%	84%	25%
OWN BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE	2%	8%	4%
SOCIAL SECURITY AND RAILROAD REQUIREMENT	.6%	1%	37%
ESTATES, TRUSTS AND DIVIDENDS, NET RENTAL INCOME AND INTEREST ON SAVINGS ACCOUNTS AND BONDS	1%	2%	14%
WELFARE PAYMENTS AND OTHER PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	2%	1%	2%
UNEMPLOYMENT AND WORKMANS COMP., GOVERNMENT PENSIONS AND VETERANS PAYMENT	2%	1%	6%
PRIVATE PENSIONS AND ANNUITIES, ALIMONEY AND OTHER INCOME	2%	1%	9%
NET INCOME FROM OWN FARM	.3%	.3%	2%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

CONSUMER EDUCATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 3

TO THE TEACHER:

Have students view the film entitled "Pensions-The Broken Dreams". This may be borrowed from:

Instructional Support Center
Instructional Systems Development Center
Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida 32306 (904) 644-2820

Before showing the film discuss the following terms:

1. Pension: a fixed sum of money paid regularly to a person following his/her retirement from service.
2. Private Pensions: pension plans devised by organizations that are privately owned.
3. Ralph Nader: a consumer advocate.
4. Premise: something assumed or taken for granted.

After the class has had the chance to view the film, discuss the following questions:

1. What age group is hit the hardest by promised pensions that are never kept?
2. How many years do you have to put in with a company before you are elligible for a pension?
3. What are your feelings about pensions now that you have viewed this film?

At this time it would be a good idea to have a lawyer come in and talk to the class on laws covering pensions and the rights of the elderly. An excellent source of information on pensions is Know Your Pension Plan which is published by the U. S. Department of Labor. It may be obtained by writing: U.S. Department of Labor, Labor-Management, Service Administration, Washington, D. C. , 20216.

CONSUMER EDUCATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 4

TO THE TEACHER:

Have students perform the skit "Mrs. Ramsey and the Salesman". After students have performed the skit discuss the following questions.

1. How did the salesman exploit Mrs. Ramsey?
2. What precautions should elderly people or any consumer take before signing a paper?
3. How should Mrs. Ramsey have handled the salesman?
4. What can Mrs. Ramsey do now that she has signed a contract?
5. Why are elderly individuals a good target for gyps and frauds?

ACTIVITY 4

Mrs. Ramsey and the Salesman

Characters:

Mr. Edwards: a door to door salesman.

Mrs. Ramsey: a 72 year old widow.

Scene:

Mr. Edwards sells sewing machines door to door. He has been known to take advantage of people by using unethical selling methods. The scene opens as Mr. Edwards is knocking on Mrs. Ramsey's door.

Mr. Edwards: (Knocks on front door)

Mrs. Ramsey: (opens door) Hello young man. What can I do for you?

Mr. Edwards: Hi! Mrs. Ramsey. I'm your local sewing machine salesman. I can tell from looking at you, you must do a lot of sewing. What a beautiful dress you have on. Did you make it?

Mrs. Ramsey: Yes I did, but that was a long time ago when my arthritis wasn't so bad.

Mr. Edwards: Are you a lucky lady! My company just came out with a new sewing machine especially for that type of problem. Wouldn't you love to be able to sew beautiful clothes once again?

Mrs. Ramsey: Would you like to come in for a cup of coffee. I haven't seen anyone for two days.

Mr. Edwards: Sure, I'd love to.

Mrs. Ramsey: You know I have ten grandchildren. I really don't get to see them much since I've been confined to my home.

Mr. Edwards: Maybe with this new sewing machine you could make them clothes. Wouldn't they be excited?

Mrs. Ramsey: I've been so tired lately, I just don't know if I have the energy to sit down and do tedious work.

Mr. Edwards: Oh, but with our new sewing machine that's made especially for arthritis victims, you will only have to exert minimum effort.

Mrs. Ramsey: Well, could I see a demonstration?

Mr. Edwards: (Pulls papers from brief case) Sure all you have to do is sign up for a free demonstration. I have the forms to fill out here. Just sign here and you will receive further instructions in the mail.

Mrs. Ramsey: Well, I guess if it's that easy. (signs paper)

Mr. Edwards: Mrs. Ramsey it was a pleasure to talk to you today. I look forward to seeing you soon.

Mrs. Ramsey: Come back anytime. I always enjoy company (salesman walks out the door)

Two weeks later Mrs. Ramsey gets a bill for $350.00. What she had actually signed was an agreement to purchase the machine.

CONSUMER EDUCATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 5

TO THE TEACHER:

Have students interview various store managers in your area. Give out the interview sheet as a guide in asking questions. Before allowing students to interview, go over some do's and don'ts about conducting an interview. After all interviews are completed, allow students to report their findings to the rest of the class. Assign a student or group of students to make up a list of all the stores offering special services to the elderly. These lists may be distributed to the elderly in your community.

ACTIVITY 5

INTERVIEW SHEET

1. Name of store _____

2. What type of merchandise is sold here? _____

_____

3. Does the store offer any type of discount to elderly citizens? _____

_____

4. What are the conditions of the discount? (i. e. age, minimum purchase, etc.)

_____

_____

5. What other types of services are offered for elderly consumers? _____

_____

_____

6. How does the store inform elderly citizens of their special services?

_____

_____

_____

7. Any additional comments: _____

_____

**Note to the student:

After the interview, decide if this store should be placed on the list of stores for elderly individuals. This will be done in class when all interviews are completed.

CONSUMER EDUCATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 6

TO THE TEACHER:

Invite a local lawyer to your class to address the problems of the elderly.

The following questions may help in directing discussion.

1. Why do most elderly people contact a lawyer?
2. What special problems do the elderly encounter?
3. Are there any special consumer laws that are directed toward protecting the elderly?

CONSUMER EDUCATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE 7

TO THE TEACHER:

After class discussion on consumer problems of the elderly have students work on the puzzle. Answers to the puzzle are as follows:

DOWN

1. High Pressure
2. Senior Citizen
3. Reduced Income
4. Vulnerable
5. Swindle
6. F T C
7. Bogus Contest

ACROSS

8. Referral Selling
9. Gimmick
10. Contract
11. Consumer
12. Fraudalent
13. Inflation

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

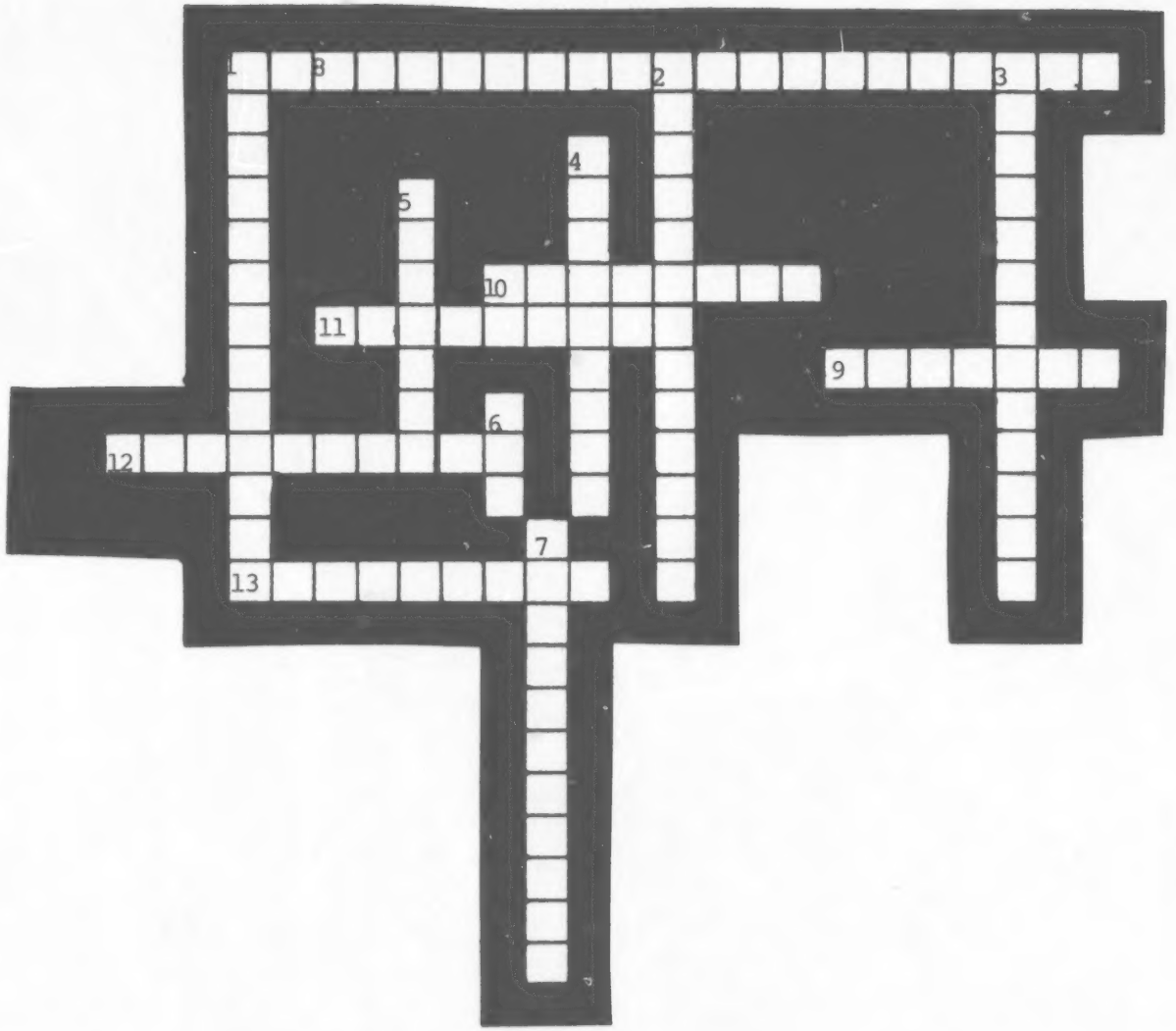
DOWN

1. A type of sales tactic uses to batter down the elderly's resistance.
2. A term used to describe a 65 years old American.
3. What the elderly usually live on after retirement.
4. A term applied to the elderly that describes the ease with which they can be taken advantage of.
5. To obtain money by fraud or deceit.
6. Initials for a consumer protection governing body.
7. A type of game that is staged to deceive the elderly.

ACROSS

8. A type of sales tactic that leads the buyer to believe that by giving the seller names of friends as prospects, the buyer will get a discount on what he/she is buying.
9. An attention getting device.
10. A legal document.
11. Anyone who buys or uses goods and services.
12. Misleading act, front.
13. An increase in the price level but a decrease in the value of money.

ACTIVITY 7



SUPPLEMENTAL CONSUMER EDUCATION LEARNING ACTIVITIES

TO THE TEACHER:

The following is a list of additional activities you may want to use in this unit:

***Discuss problems the elderly may have in consumer buying. Some areas to include are high pressure sales, referral selling, insurance sales and the vulnerability of the elderly.

***For an FHA/HERO project, compile a pamphlet that contains some common do's and don'ts on consumer buying. Include information on advertising and sales tactics. This pamphlet can be geared toward the elderly or to the average consumer. Make the pamphlet available to the senior citizens in your community by placing it in grocery stores, senior centers and churches.

***Have students write for the booklet entitled Protection for the Elderly. Address: Federal Trade Commission, FTC Buyers Guide No. 9, Washington, D. C. 20580. Have students summarize the contents for the class. This could be used as an extra credit assignment.